

LONE WOLF

AND

子連水狼

CUB

VOLUME 3

THE FLUTE
OF THE
FALLEN TIGER

By KAZUO KOIKE
& GOSEKI KOJIMA



子連水狼

LONE WOLF AND CUB

子連水狼

story

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DARK HORSE MANGA™

translation
DANA LEWIS
lettering & retouch
DIGITAL CHAMELEON
cover illustration
FRANK MILLER with **LYNN VARLEY**
publisher
MIKE RICHARDSON
editor
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Published by Dark Horse Manga, a division of Dark Horse Comics, Inc.,
in association with Kabushiki Kaisha Live Works and Koike Shoin Publishing Company

Dark Horse Comics, Inc.
10956 SE Main Street, Milwaukie, OR 97222
www.darkhorse.com

First edition: November 2000
ISBN 978-1-56971-504-8

9 10 8

Printed in Canada

Lone Wolf and Cub Vol. 3 – The Flute of the Fallen Tiger

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OF THE
FALLEN TIGER

By KAZUO KOIKE
& GOSEKI KOJIMA

子連れ狼



VOLUME

3

A NOTE TO READERS

Lone Wolf and Cub is famous for its carefully researched re-creation of Edo-Period Japan. To preserve the flavor of the work, we have chosen to retain many Edo-Period terms that have no direct equivalents in English. Japanese is written in a mix of Chinese ideograms and a syllabic writing system, resulting in numerous synonyms. In the glossary, you may encounter words with multiple meanings. These are words written with Chinese ideograms that are pronounced the same but carry different meanings. A Japanese reader seeing the different ideograms would know instantly which meaning it is, but these synonyms can cause confusion when Japanese is spelled out in our alphabet. *O-yurushi o* (please forgive us)!

LONE WOLF AND CUB



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the fifteenth



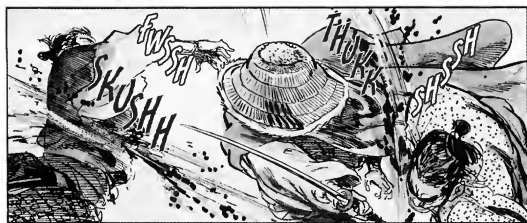
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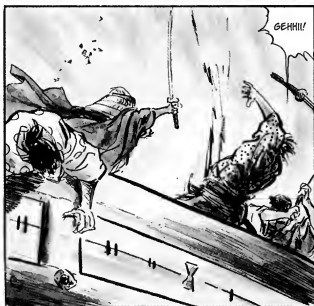


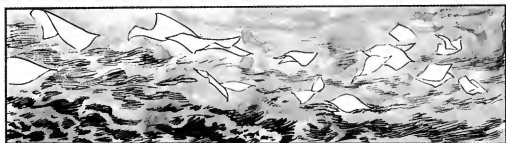


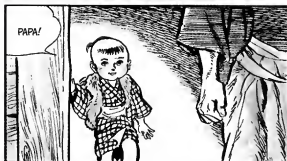


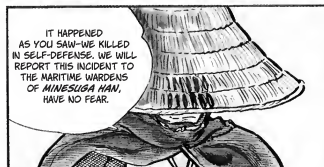




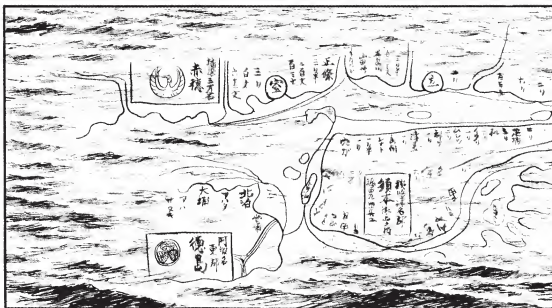


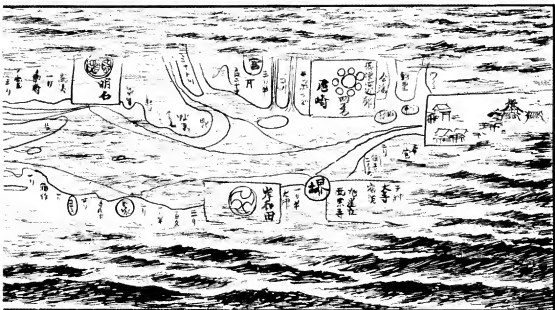
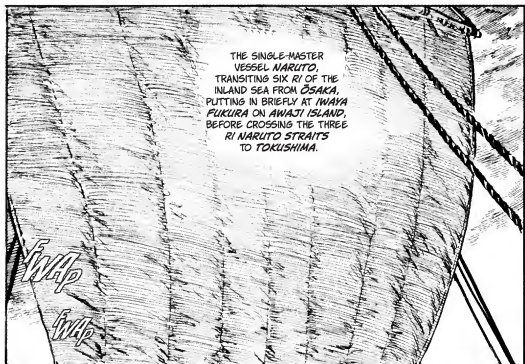


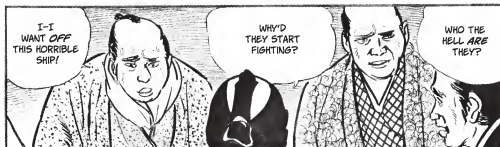


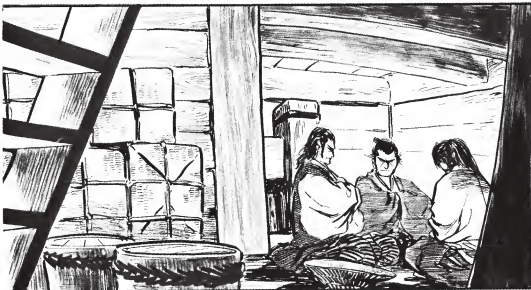












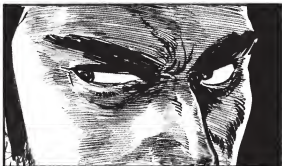


??
"BENTENRAI"
...?
WH-WHAT'S
THAT?

IT'S THEIR NAME.
BENMA, TENMA, AND
KURUMA. TAKE THE FIRST
CHINESE CHARACTER OF
EACH OF THEIR NAMES
AND LINE 'EM UP, AND
SEE, BENTENRAI!



GET IT?
THE COMING
OF BENTEN,
GODDESS
OF GOOD
FORTUNE!



YOU MAY NOT
KNOW THEM
DOWN HERE IN
OSAKA AND POINTS
WEST, BUT UP IN
EDO AND BEYOND...

JUST THE
NAME'S ENOUGH TO
STOP A KID CRYING.
THAT'S HOW BAD
THEY ARE.



ARE THEY...
WANTED
CRIMINALS?

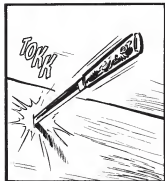
NAW!
OTHER WAY
AROUND! THE
OFFICIALS COME
BEGGING THEM
TO WORK!

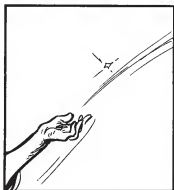
EH?!

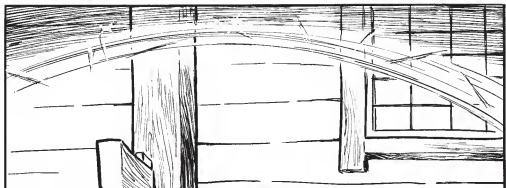


LICENSED
TO KILL, SEE.
AS MUCH AS
THEY WANT!

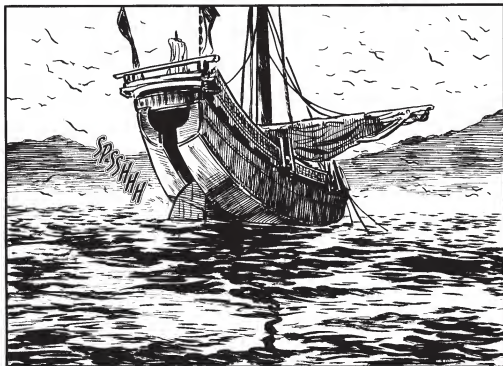
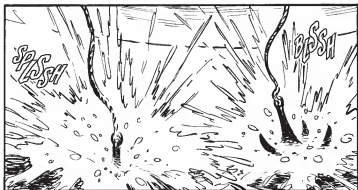
6-GOOD
GOD!













HEAVE HO!

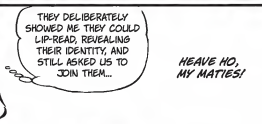


THEY READ LIPS TO SEE WHAT THEIR OPPONENTS ARE SAYING...

THEY CAN ONLY BE...



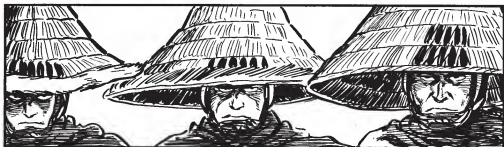
THAT'S WHY THEY THREW THE KOGARA THROWING KNIFE AS WELL...



THEY DELIBERATELY SHOWED ME THEY COULD LIP-READ, REVEALING THEIR IDENTITY, AND STILL ASKED US TO JOIN THEM...

HEAVE HO, MY MATIES!

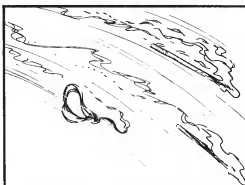












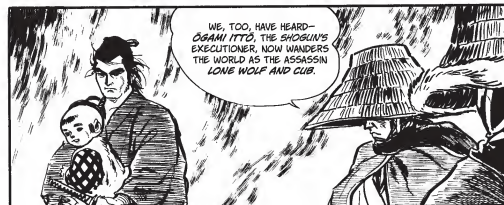
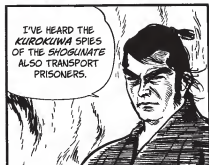








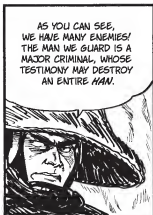






WE ARE GUARDIANS,
YOU THE ASSASSIN.
EVEN IF YOU DO NOT SEEK
TO KILL OUR CLIENT,
DUTY DEMANDS WE
MAKE CERTAIN.

THUS WE
HAD YOU COME
WITH US, IN A
WAY THAT WOULD
NOT OFFEND



AS YOU CAN SEE,
WE HAVE MANY ENEMIES!
THE MAN WE GUARD IS A
MAJOR CRIMINAL, WHOSE
TESTIMONY MAY DESTROY
AN ENTIRE HAN.



CAN YOU DENY
YOU'VE BEEN HIRED
TO TERMINATE HIM?
I THINK NOT!



IF SO,
WHY NOT
KILL US?



WE CANNOT
ATTACK ONE WHO
DOES NOT FIGHT AND MAY
BE INNOCENT. INSTEAD,
WE ASKED YOU TO
ACCOMPANY US...

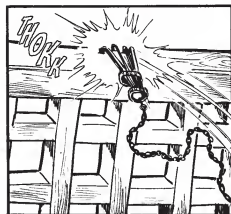
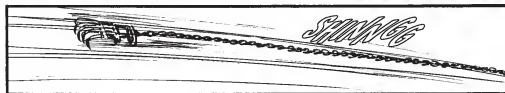
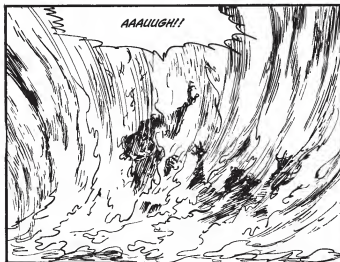
BUT NOW
THERE IS
NO NEED!!

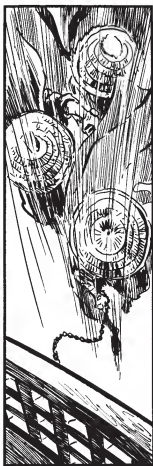


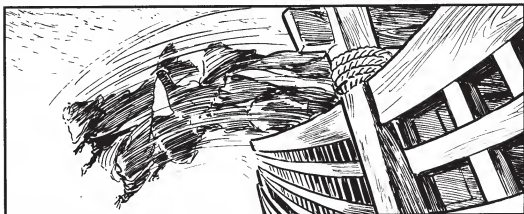
WE NINJA HAVE
NO PROBLEM ESCAPING
THESE FLAMES. NOT SO
SOMEONE BURDENED
WITH A CHILD

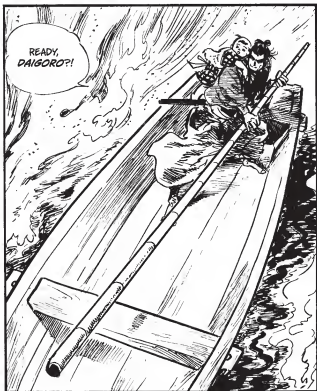


AAAAA!



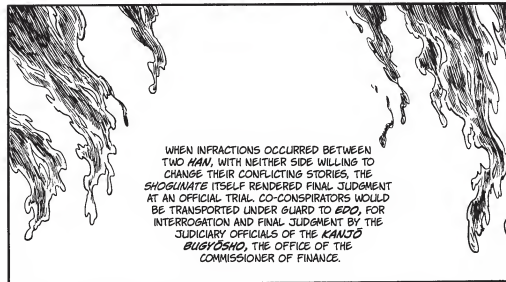
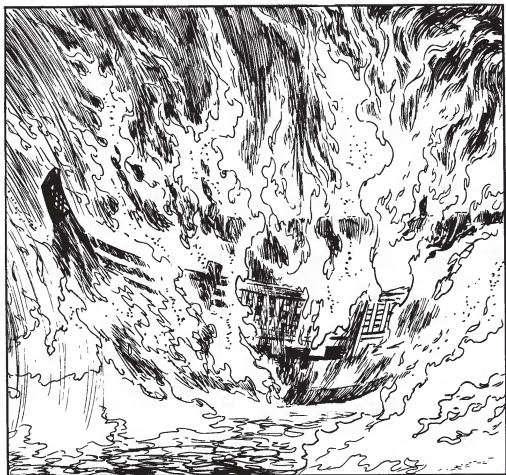


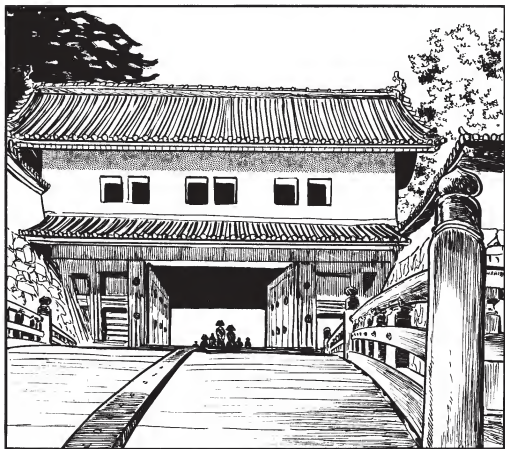












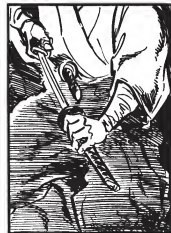
THE LOSING *HAN* COULD FACE PERMANENT DISSOLUTION.
AND THUS MANY A CONSPIRATOR NEVER REACHED *EDO*, ATTACKED AND KILLED
EN ROUTE AS THE *HAN* WITH THE WEAKER CASE SOUGHT TO BURY THE TRUTH FOREVER.
AND SO AN ADDITIONAL TASK FELL UPON THE *KUROKIWA* NINJA CLAN-
THE ARMED TRANSPORT OF SENSITIVE WITNESSES.

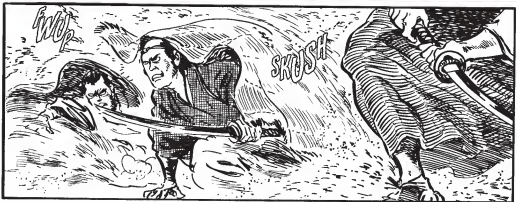
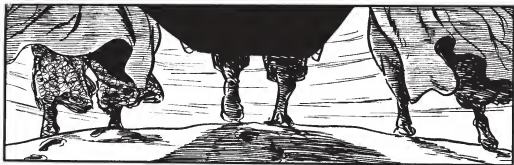


NO WONDER THOSE FELONS MARKED FOR ASSASSINATION
CAME TO WELCOME THEIR *KUROKIWA* ESCORTS AS IF THEY
WERE ANGELS OF THE *BODDHISATVA* OF MERCY, *ZAIBEN TENNYO*
HERSELF. AND NONE MORE SO THAN THE DEADLY
HIDARI BROTHERS, *BENTENRAI*.





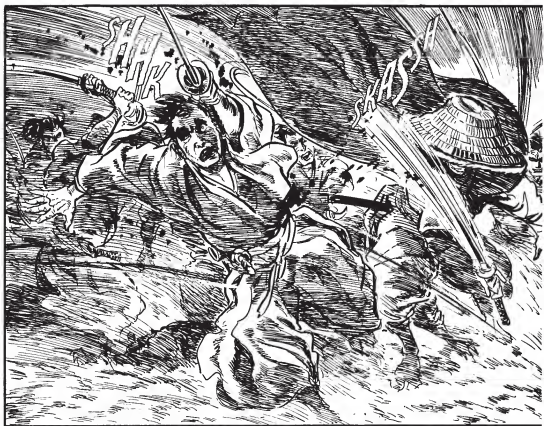




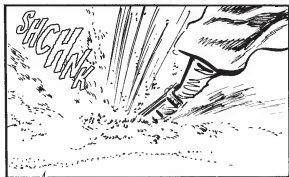
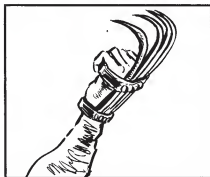


HYANNNNN!!



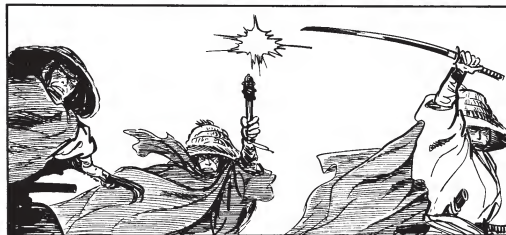




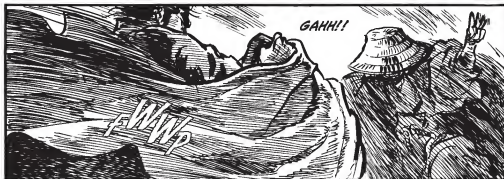
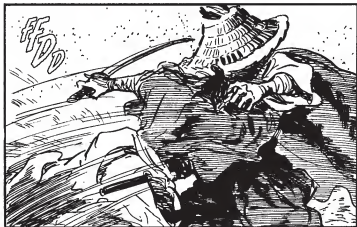




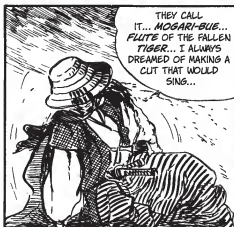


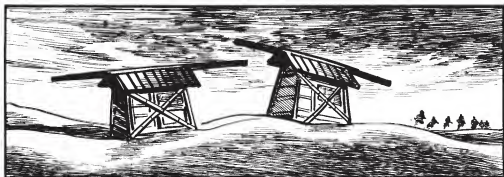










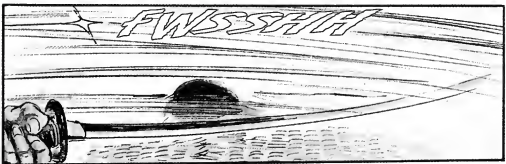




the sixteenth

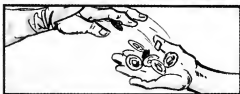
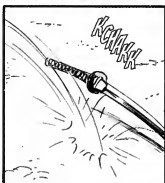
**Half Mat,
One Mat,
a Fistful
of Rice**

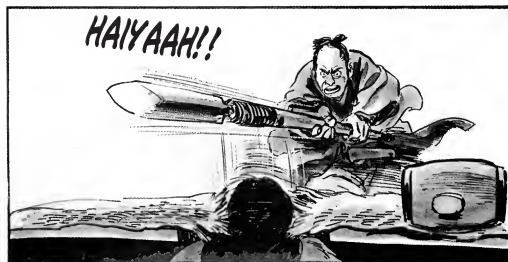
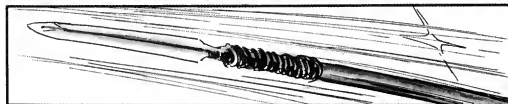
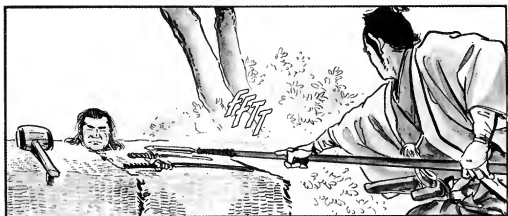


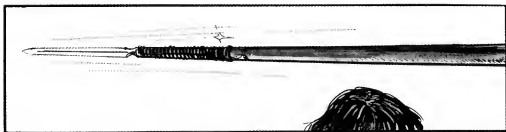


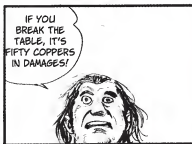
"HEAD FOR SALE!
"HEADLESS SAKON"

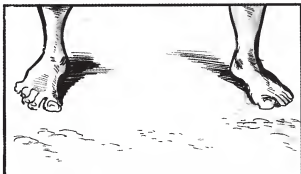


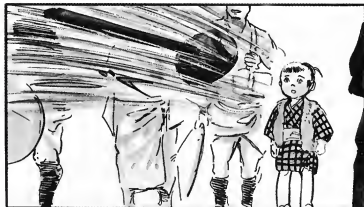
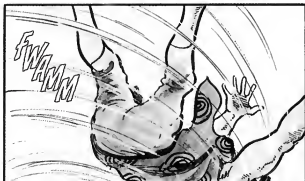
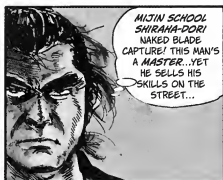






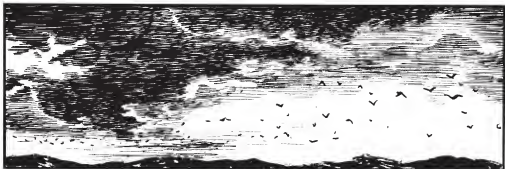


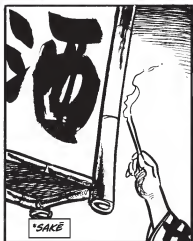


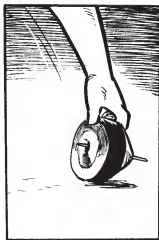
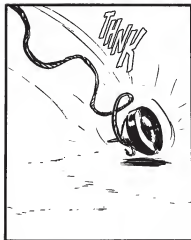


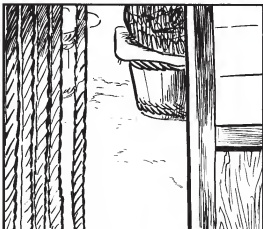
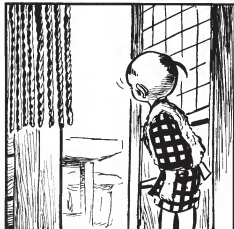
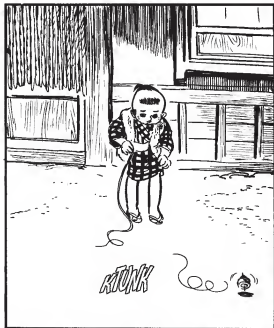


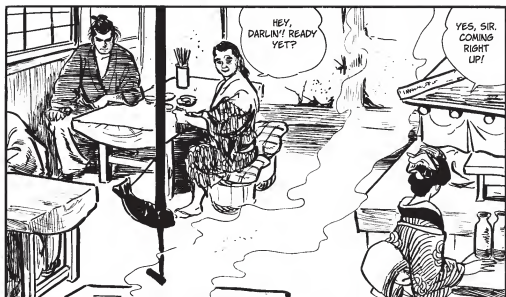






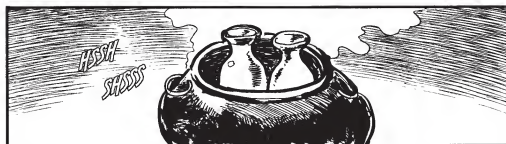


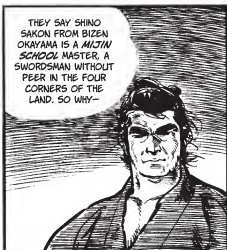


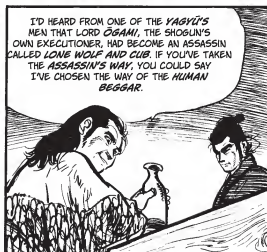
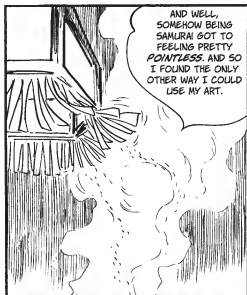
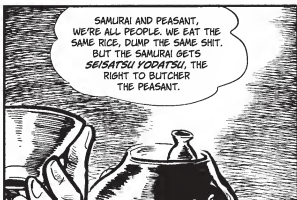


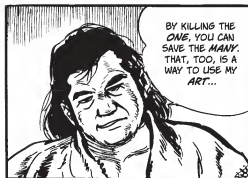


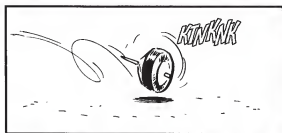


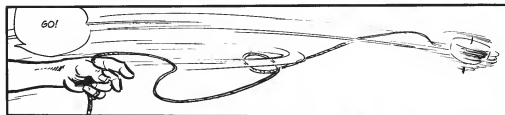
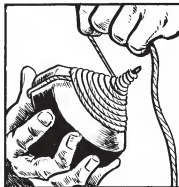


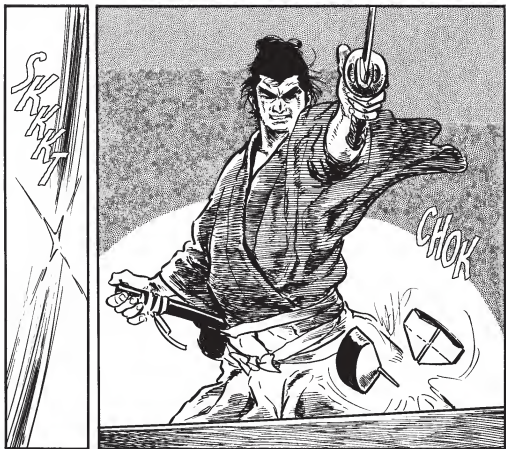


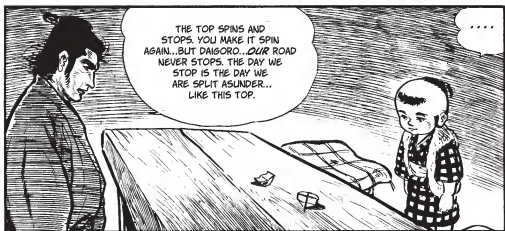












THE TOP SPINS AND
STOPS. YOU MAKE IT SPIN
AGAIN...BUT DAIGORO...*OUR* ROAD
NEVER STOPS. THE DAY WE
STOP IS THE DAY WE
ARE SPLIT ASUNDER...
LIKE THIS TOP.

....



WE'RE
LEAVING,
DAIGORO.

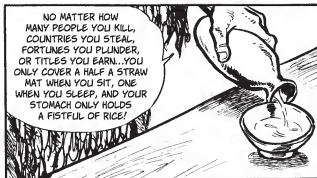
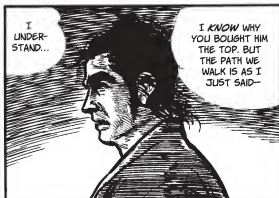
UHN!

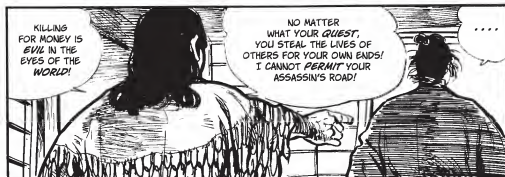
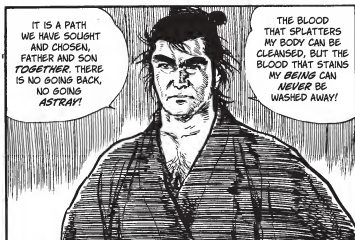


WAIT!



HAVE YOU NO PITY FOR
YOUR *SON*?! DON'T YOU
WANT HIM TO BE A STRONG,
GENTLE, UPRIGHT MAN,
WITH *COMPASSION* FOR
THE SORROWS OF THIS
WORLD?!

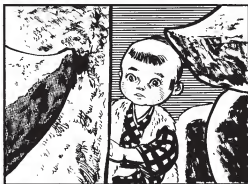
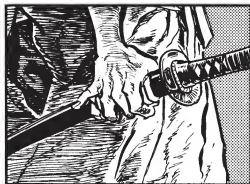






SO
BE IT!



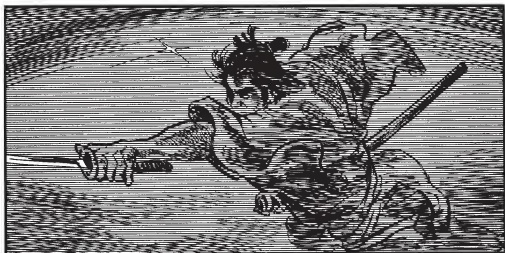


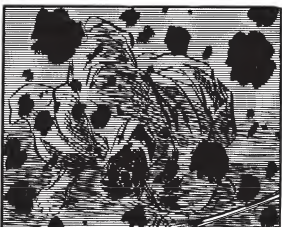


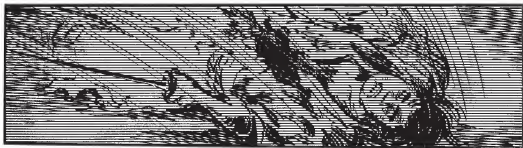


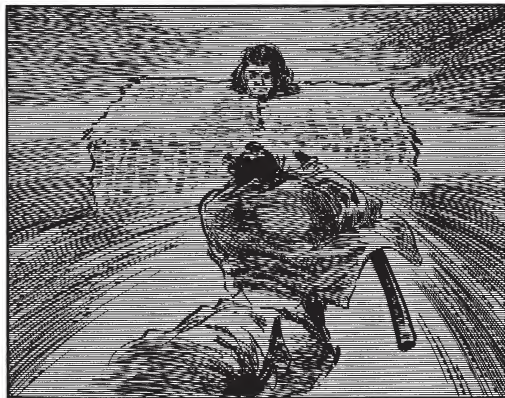


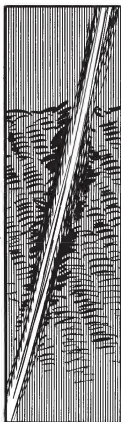
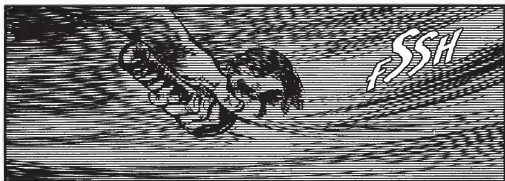


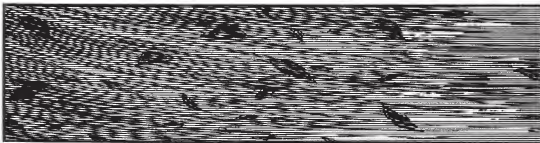
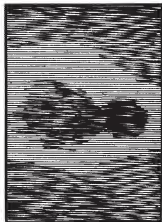
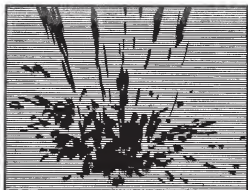


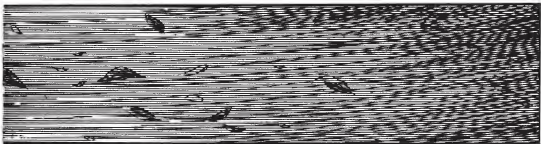






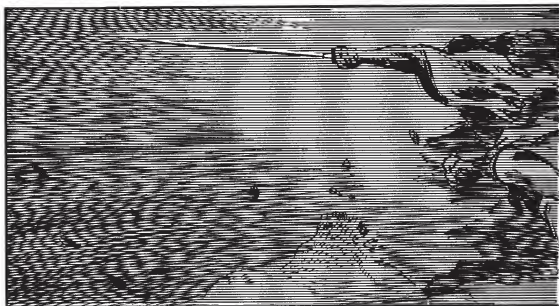
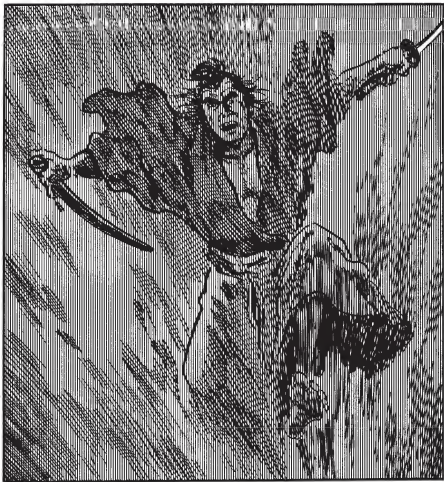


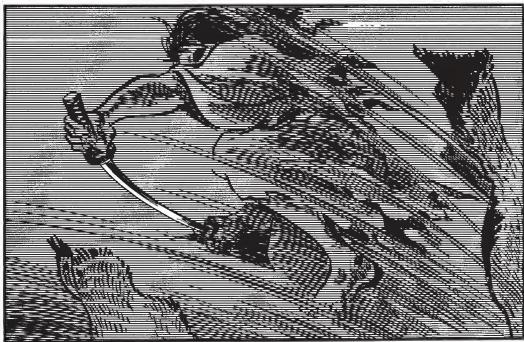


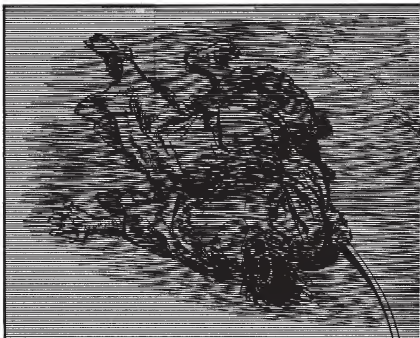
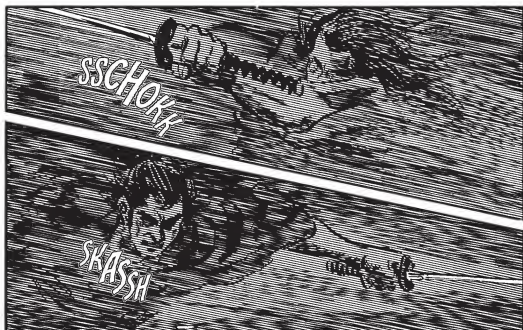


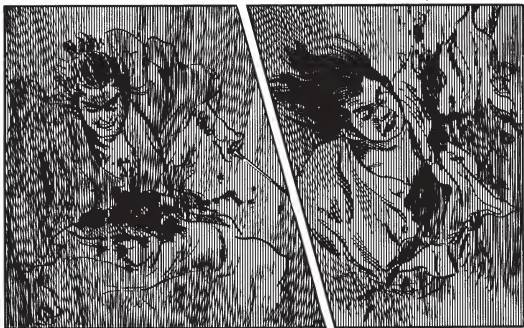


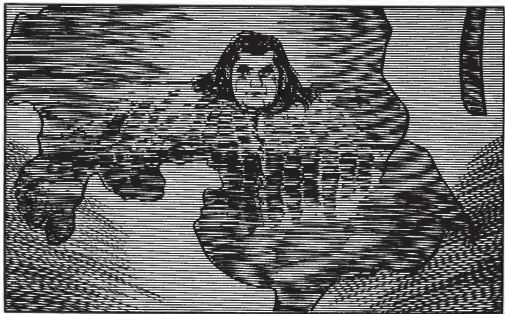
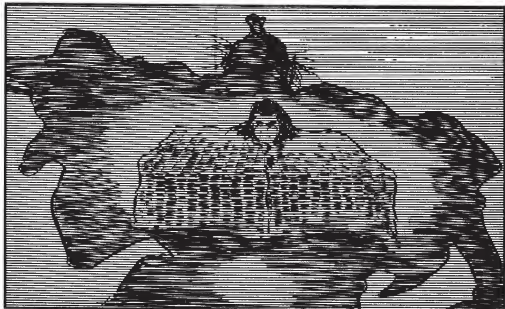


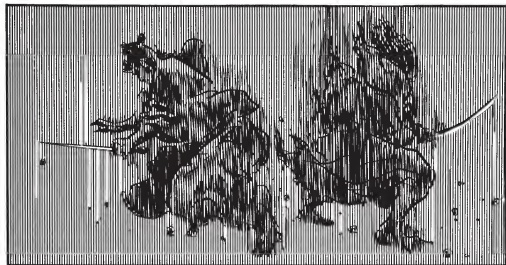


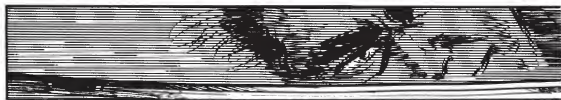




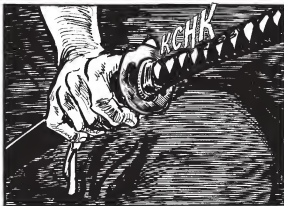
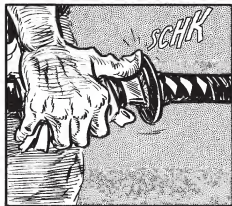


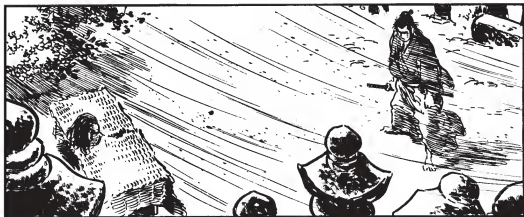


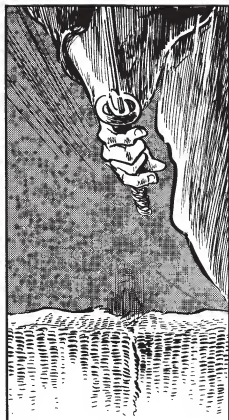
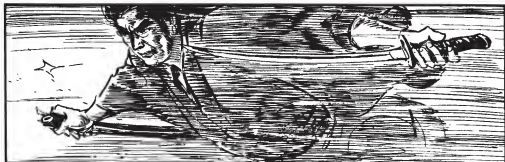




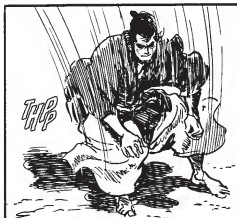












HHNG...

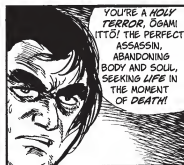
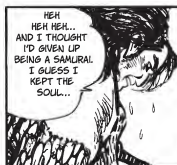
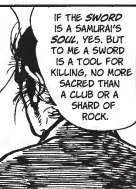
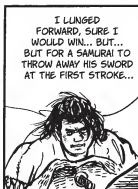
YOU
FACED ME IN A
CROUCH SO YOU
COULD SPRING
STRAIGHT INTO
THE AIR.



IN...
INDEED...

THEN WHY
DIDN'T YOU
LEAP WITHOUT
RUNNING?

WHY DIDN'T
YOU USE THE
MIJIN SCHOOL
HISSHOKEN
SOARING STROKE
TO STRIKE FROM
BELOW?!



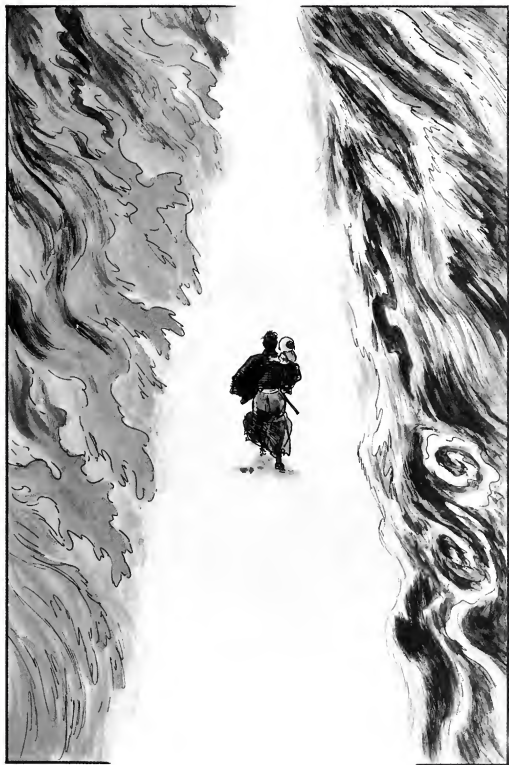




the seventeenth



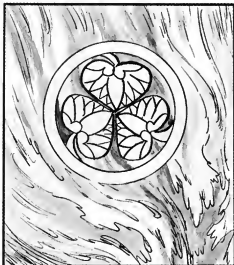
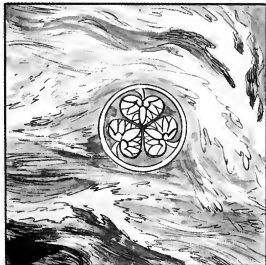
**The
White
Path
Between
the
Rivers**

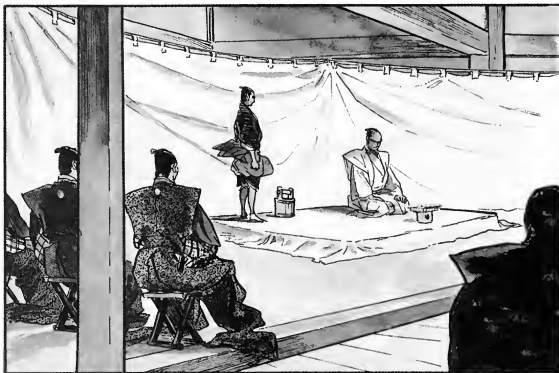
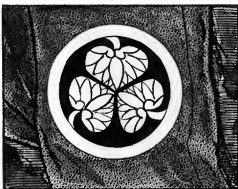
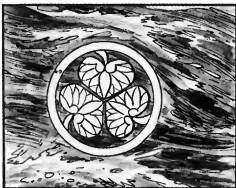
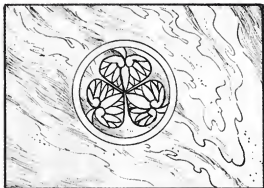


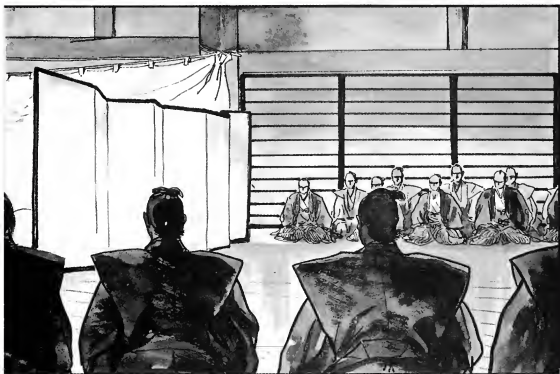




ONE HEART.
TWO RIVERS.
THE WHITE PATH.
ISSHIN NISEN BYAKUDŌ!
IN THE WORDS OF THE BUDDHISTS,
THE RIVER OF FIRE IS THE RIVER
OF JEALOUSY, THE RIVER OF WATER
THE RIVER OF GREED. BUT TO HE
WHO DEFIES TEMPTATION AND WALKS
THE WHITE PATH BETWEEN THE RIVERS
WITH PERFECT HEART, TO HIM THE
SHORES OF JŌDŌ, THE PURE
LAND OF PARADISE.



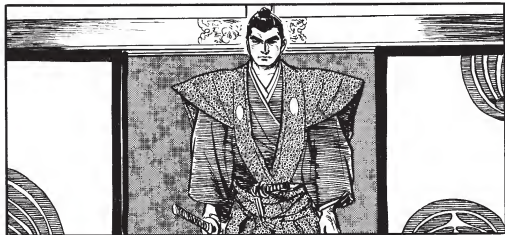


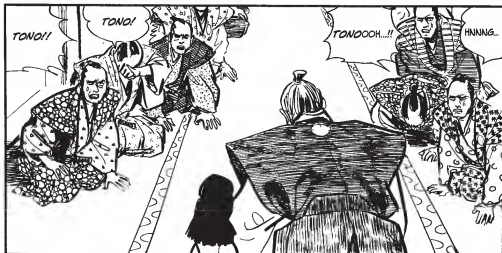
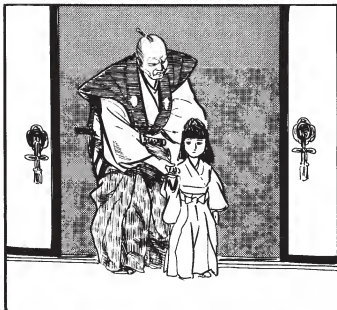


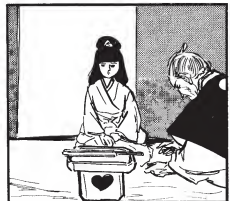


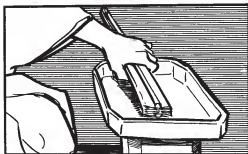










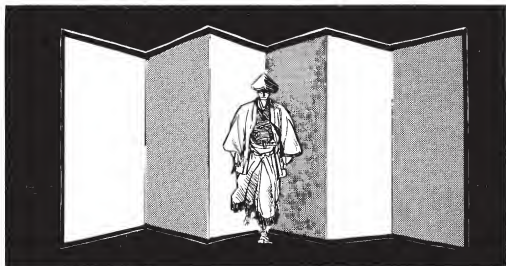




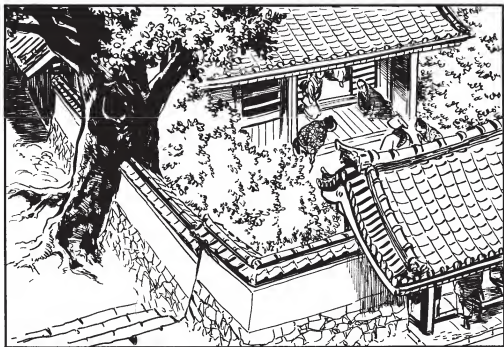
FOR CENTURIES, THE TOKUGAWA SHÖGUNATE CONTROLLED THE DAIMYÖ LORDS OF JAPAN'S UNRULY HAN WITH AN IRON FIST. THE SLIGHTEST SIGN OF DEFIANCE COULD COST A DAIMYÖ HIS TITLE AND HIS LANDS; HIS FAMILY NAME COULD BE ABOLISHED, AND THE LORD HIMSELF BROUGHT TO EDO CASTLE FOR DEATH BY SEPPUKU. IN TIME, THREE SPECIAL AGENCIES AROSE TO ENFORCE THIS REIGN OF TERROR. FIRST, THE NINJA SPY NETWORK KNOWN AS THE O-*NIWABAN*, OR GARDEN WARDENS, DEDICATED TO UNCOVERING EVIDENCE FOR BLACKMAILING AND DESTROYING TROUBLESOME HAN. SECOND, THE SHÖGUN'S SECRET ASSASSINS, CHARGED WITH KILLING ANY HAN OFFICIAL WHO OBSTRUCTED THE SHÖGUNATE'S WILL. AND LAST, THE KÖGI KAISHAKUNIN, THE DESIGNATED SECOND AND FINAL EXECUTIONER AT A DAIMYÖ'S SEPPUKU DEATH.

UNDER THE UNCOMPROMISING CODE OF BUSHIDÖ, THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR, IT WAS UNTHINKABLE FOR A DAIMYÖ'S RETAINER TO TURN HIS SWORD UPON HIS MASTER, EVEN TO END THE AGONY OF SEPPUKU. AND THUS THE SHÖGUN APPOINTED HIS OWN CHOSEN KÖGI KAISHAKUNIN TO PERFORM THE FINAL CUT FOR A DISHONORED LORD. THIS EXECUTIONER WAS ALLOWED TO BEAR THE HOLLYHOCK CREST OF THE TOKUGAWA CLAN ITSELF ON HIS ROBES OF OFFICE. SYMBOLICALLY, IT WAS THE SHÖGUN HIMSELF, AND NO OTHER, WHO CUT OFF THE HEADS OF THE DAIMYÖ.

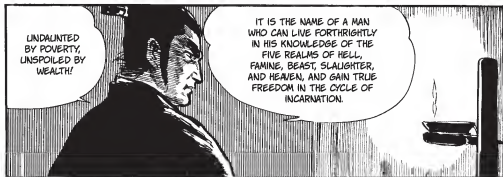
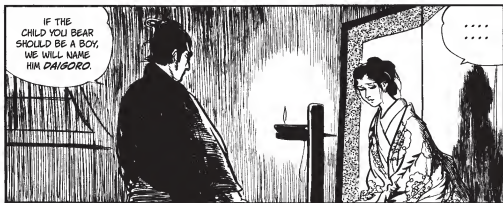
ÖGAMI ITTÖ WAS THIS CHOSEN MAN, THE KÖGI KAISHAKUNIN, SELECTED BY THE SHÖGUN HIMSELF TO SERVE AS HIS EXECUTIONER IN THE HOLLYHOCK ROBES OF THE TOKUGAWA CLAN.

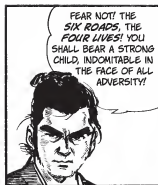


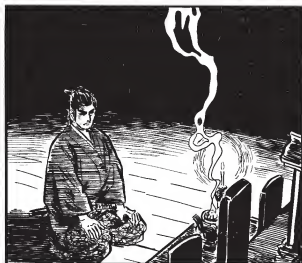
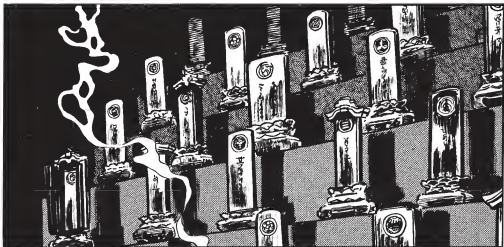








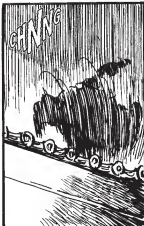
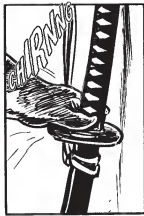


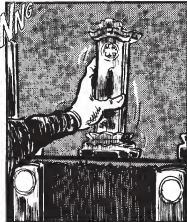
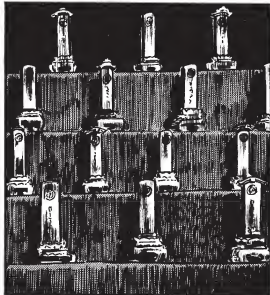


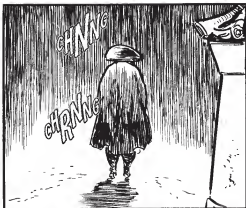
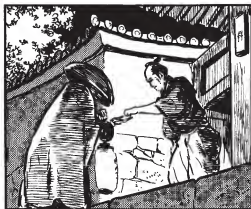
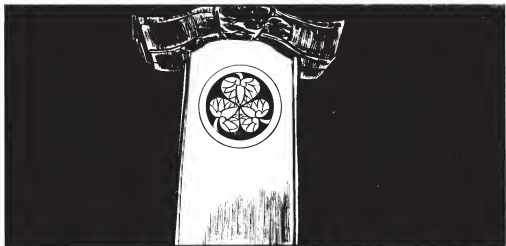


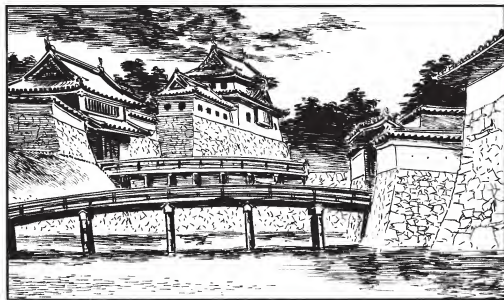






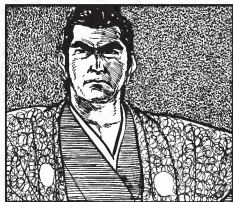


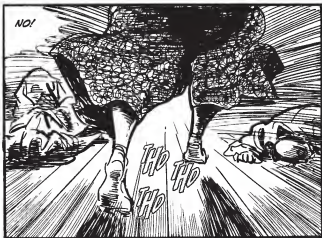












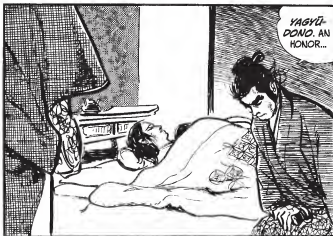
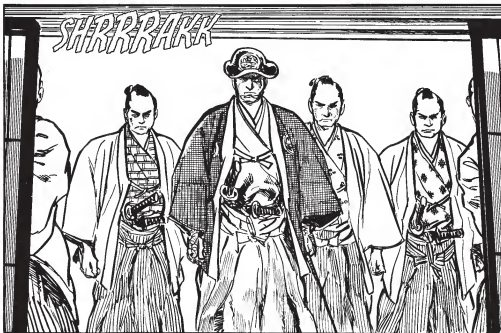
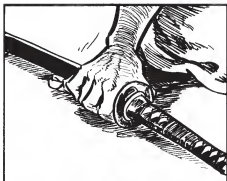


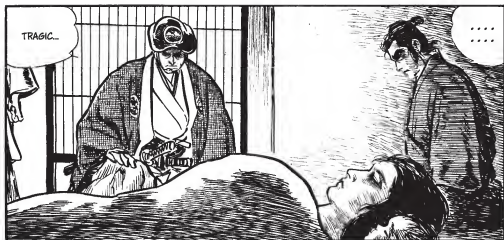






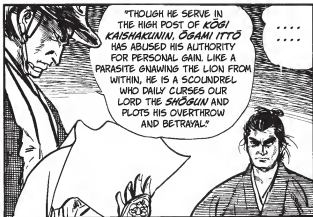








!



"THOUGH HE SERVE IN THE HIGH POST OF **KŌBI KAISHAKUNIN**, **ŌGAMI ITTŌ** HAS ABUSED HIS AUTHORITY FOR PERSONAL GAIN. LIKE A PARASITE GNAWING THE LION FROM WITHIN, HE IS A SCOUNDREL WHO DAILY CURSES OUR LORD THE **SHŌGUN** AND PLOTS HIS OVERTHROW AND BETRAYAL."

....



"KNOW YOU THAT THE PROOF IS TO BE FOUND IN THE **ŌGAMI** FAMILY TEMPLE, DEPRIVED OF OUR LORD AND MASTER, ACCUSED IN THE NAME OF THE **SHŌGUN** OF TREASON, AND LAMENTING OUR LORD'S UNTIMELY DEMISE..."

...WE HEREBY PUNISH THE PERFDIOUS **ŌGAMI** CLAN, AND FOLLOW OUR LORD IN DEATH BY **SEPPUKU**."



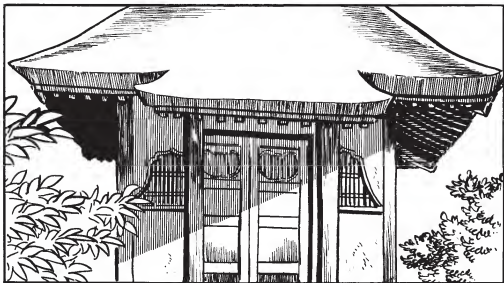
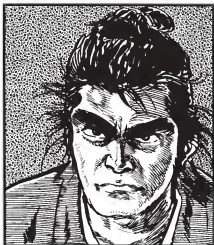
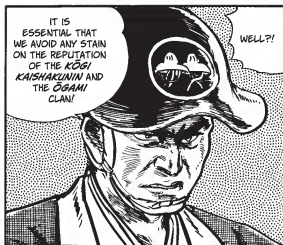
ODAI HYŌGO, SANSHŪ-IKOMA HAN HANSHI.
SIGNED IN BLOOD!

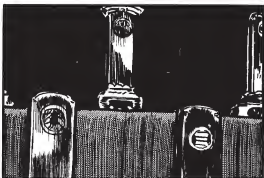
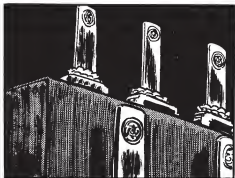
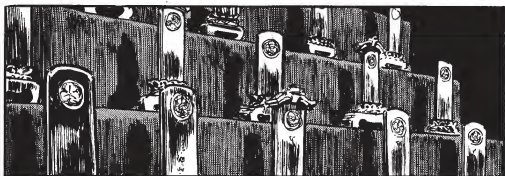
ATOBE SHICHINOSUKE,
SIGNED IN BLOOD!
MAKISHIMA GORŌZEMON,
SIGNED IN BLOOD!



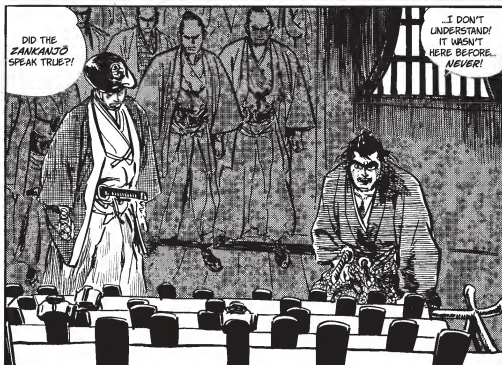
...W-
WHAT?!













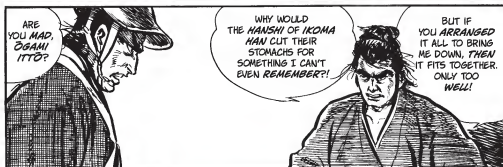




WHAT?!

IF YOU
YAGYŪ ARE
BEHIND THIS...

...EVERYTHING
MAKES
SENSE!



ARE
YOU MAD,
OGAMI
ITTO?

WHY WOULD
THE HANSHI OF IKOMA
HAN CUT THEIR
STOMACHS FOR
SOMETHING I CAN'T
EVEN REMEMBER?!

BUT IF
YOU ARRANGED
IT ALL TO BRING
ME DOWN, THEN
IT FITS TOGETHER.
ONLY TOO
WELL!



I KNOW
THE URA-YAGYŪ
HUNGERS FOR THE
POST OF KŌGI
KAISHAKUNIN.

THAT'S
WHAT'S
BEHIND
IT?



REALLY?!
AND WHAT IS THIS
URA-YAGYŪ OF WHICH
YOU SPEAK? YOU TALK
AS THOUGH OUR
YAGYŪ CLAN HAS
TWO FACES...

DON'T
ACT
STUPID!!



JŪHEI
MITSUYOSHI,
TOSHINORI AND
MUNEYUKU, THE
SONS OF MUNENORI!
THESE ARE THE PUBLIC
FACE, THE OMOTE-
YAGYŪ!

BUT THERE
WAS ONE MORE CHILD-
GISEN! BY OTHER NAME,
RETSUDŌ! HE IS THE
URA-YAGYŪ!



HRNN!



IN OTHER WORDS,
YOUR GRANDFATHER!
I WELL KNOW THE
TRUE YAGYŪ IS THE
URA-YAGYŪ,
CONTROLLED FROM
THE SHADOWS BY
RETSUDŌ HIMSELF!

HE MANIPULATES
THE GOVERNMENT. HE
DEPLOYS THE KUROKUNA
NINJA FOR HIS OWN
ENDS. AND NOW, HE
WOULD DESTROY ME AND
STEAL THE HIGH POST
OF EXECUTIONER
AS WELL!

GRR...



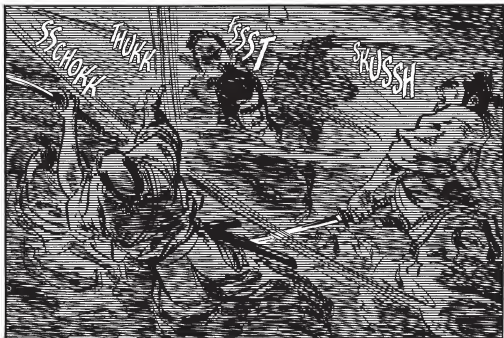
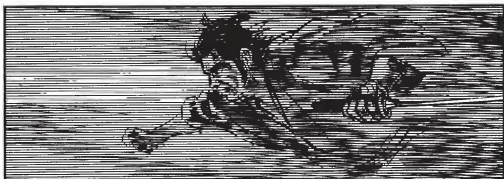
THE DOUBLED-HAT CREST
OF THE YAGYŪ! THAT IS OMOTE-
YAGYŪ THAT DECEIVES THE NATION
AS MILITARY ADVISORS TO THE SHŌGUN!
BUT THE PROOF IS THE CREST OF
THE URA-YAGYŪ. TWIN SWALLOWS,
PASSED DOWN FROM YOUR ANCESTOR
MIMASAKA-NO-KAMI
IEYOSHI HIMSELF!

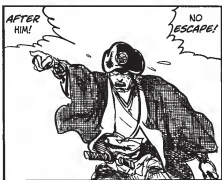




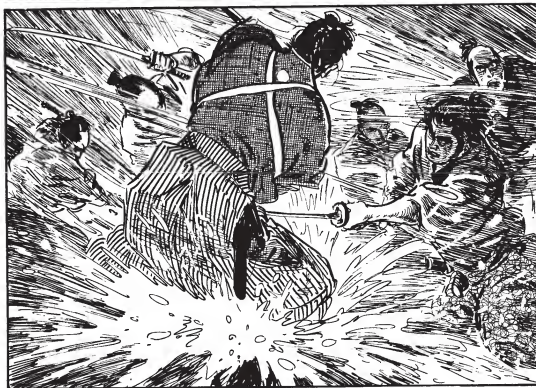
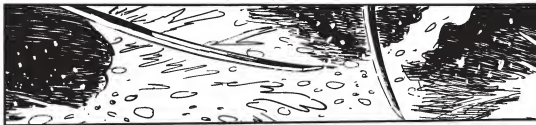
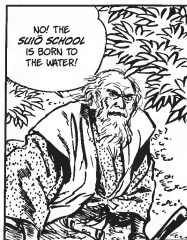




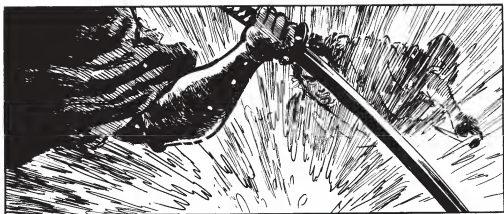




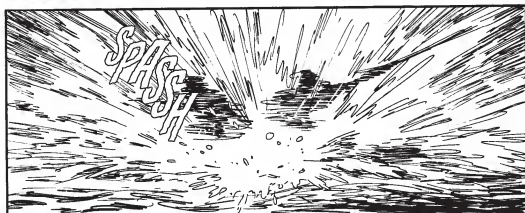
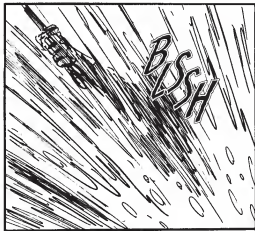
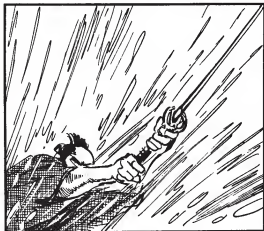














IDIOT! NEVER
TAKE THE HIGH
GUARD STANCE
IN THE WATER!
YOUR FORWARD
LUNGE IS
USELESS!



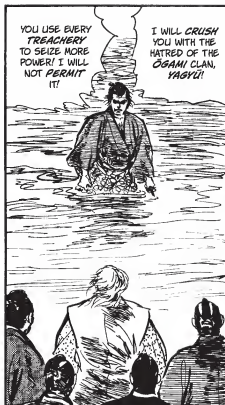
THE SUBMERGED *SUICHO*
BLADE NARROWS THE GAP
BETWEEN YOU, STROKING
UP FROM THE WAVES! YOU
WILL ALWAYS STRIKE
TOO LATE, BIZEN!



RETSUDŌ
OF THE URA-
YAGYŪ?

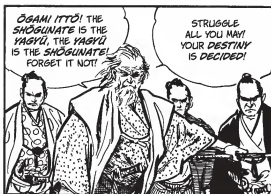


.....!



YOU USE EVERY
TREACHERY
TO SEIZE MORE
POWER! I WILL
NOT PERMIT
IT!

I WILL CRUSH
YOU WITH THE
HATRED OF THE
OGAMI CLAN,
YAGYU!



OGAMI ITTŌ! THE
SHŌGUNATE IS THE
YAGYU, THE YAGYU
IS THE SHŌGUNATE!
FORGET IT NOT!

STRUGGLE
ALL YOU MAY!
YOUR DESTINY
IS DECIDED!



FIGHT ME,
YAGYU!



YOUR SUICIDE SCHOOL
IS CHILD'S PLAY TO ME,
OGAMI! BUT WITH BIZEN
DEAD, THERE CAN BE NO
VICTORY HERE.

THE WORK OF THE
OMOTE-YAGYU
SHALL BE DONE
LEGITIMATELY! BY
DECREE OF THE
SHŌGUN!



COME
BACK!!



WASH YOUR
NECK AND
WAIT.



YOU'LL PAY...
I SWEAR
I'LL MAKE
YOU PAY!

THIS
HATRED...
MY HATRED!!



THE RIVER
OF WATER,
THE OMOTE-
YASYŪ.

THE RIVER
OF FIRE, THE
URA-YASYŪ!

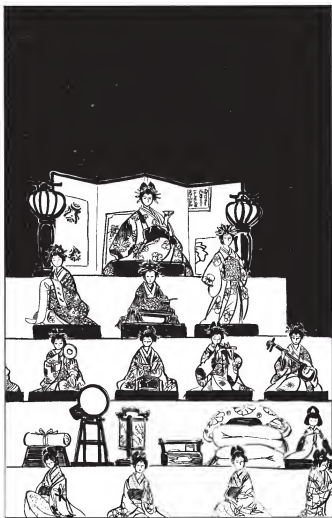
USE ALL YOUR PLOTS AND
TRICKERY AGAINST ME! I
WILL *STAY* THE WHITE WAY,
THOUGH I BE A CORPSE,
THOUGH I BE BUT *BURNED*
BONES! I SHALL HAVE
VENGEANCE...



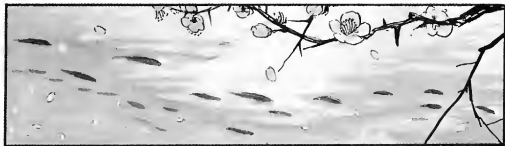
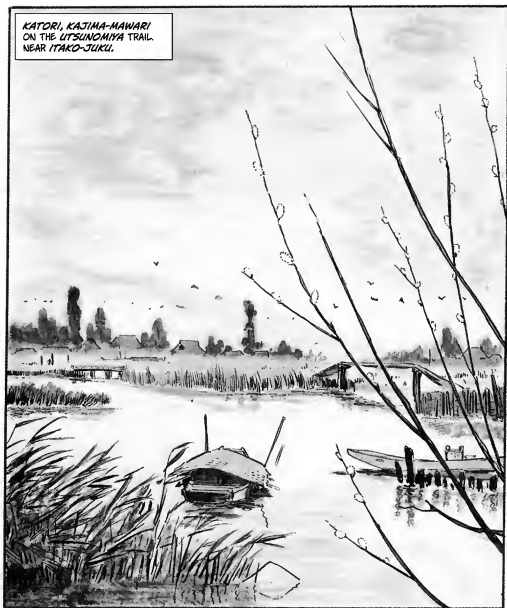
...YASYŪ!

the eighteenth

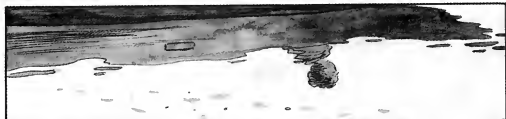
The Virgin and the Whore



*KATORI, KAJIMA-MAWARI
ON THE UTSUNOMIYA TRAIL.
NEAR ITAKO-JUKU.*



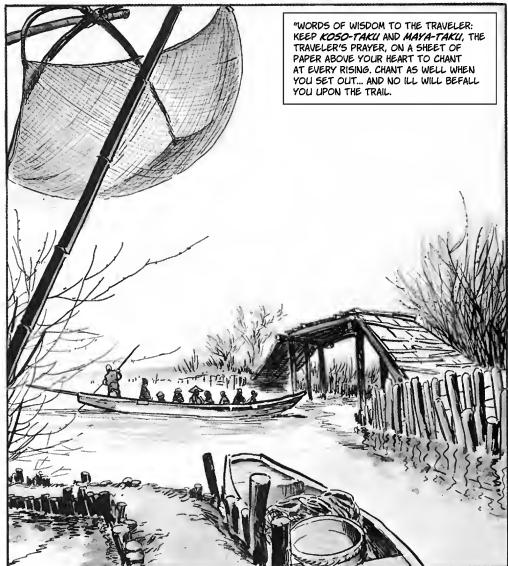
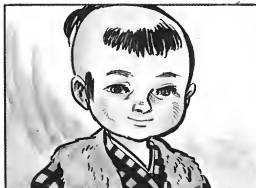






BUT!
BUT I...!



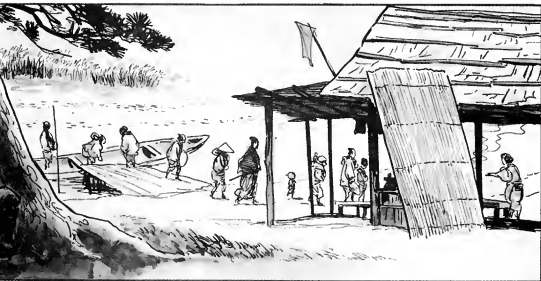


"WORDS OF WISDOM TO THE TRAVELER:
KEEP *KOSO-TAKU* AND *MAYA-TAKU*, THE
TRAVELER'S PRAYER, ON A SHEET OF
PAPER ABOVE YOUR HEART TO CHANT
AT EVERY RISING. CHANT AS WELL WHEN
YOU SET OUT... AND NO ILL WILL BEFALL
YOU UPON THE TRAIL.

"WHEN RISING EARLY OR TRAVELING LATE...
A SLICE OF RAW GINGER IS GOOD TO CHEW."



"A FELLOW TRAVELER UPON THE ROAD
IS A FRIEND FOR THEN, BUT NOT FOR
LIFE: SAFER ALWAYS TO SLEEP ALONE!"



"WHEN ON A HORSE WRITE 'SOUTH' ON YOUR PALM...
WRITE IT THRICE, AND YOU'LL NEVER TUMBLE!"







"WHEN FEET GROW TIRED, RUB SALT ON YOUR SOLES AND HOLD THEM CLOSE TO A FIRE. REPEAT AFTER BATHS WITH SALT OR SOY SAUCE...EVEN SESAME OIL AS NEEDED!"



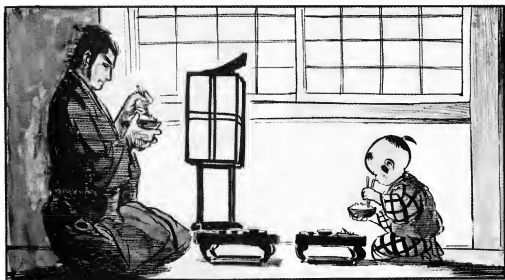


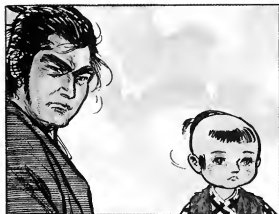










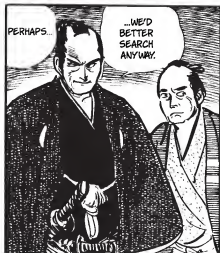
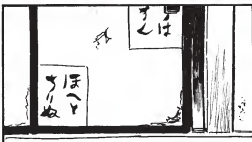


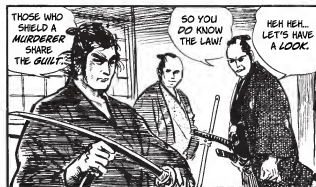
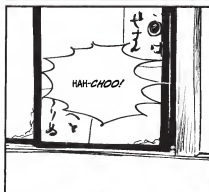
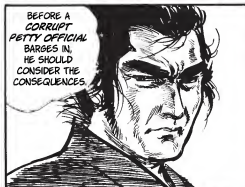


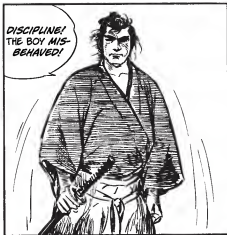


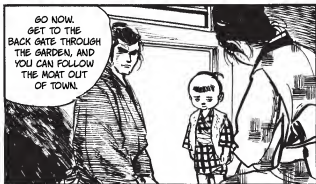
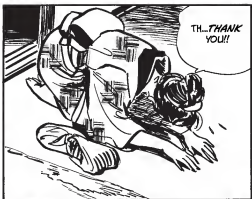


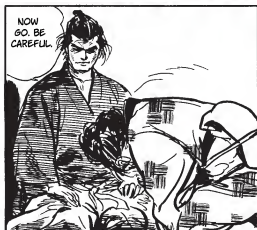
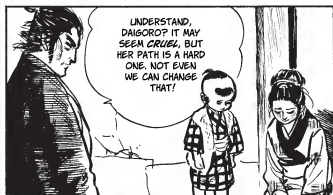
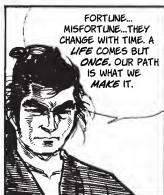




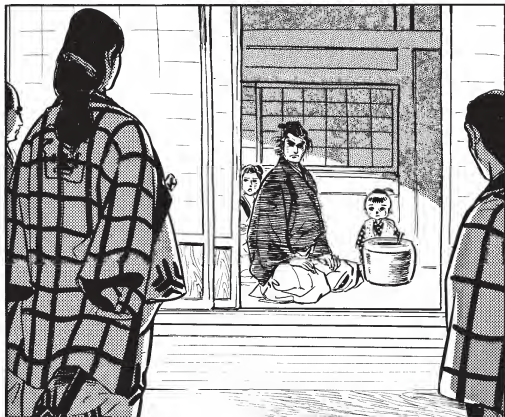


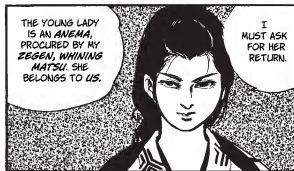


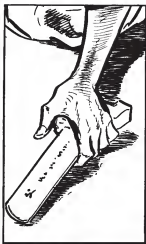


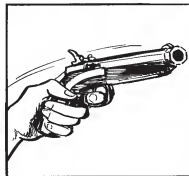












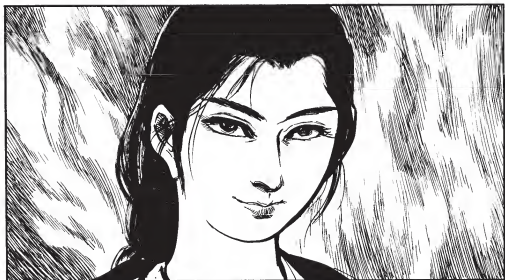
WIN OR LOSE, YOU
GAIN NOTHING BY DEFYING US!
AND YOU LOSE NO FACE,
O-SAMURAI-SAMA, BY RETURNING
HER. NOW PLEASE
WITHDRAW.

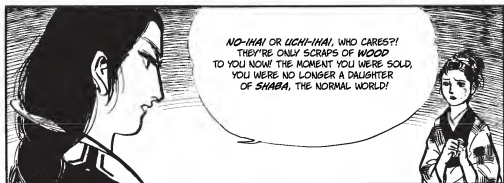
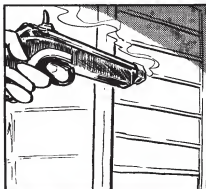
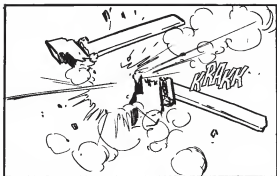
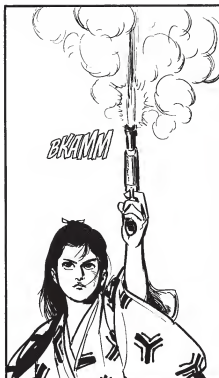


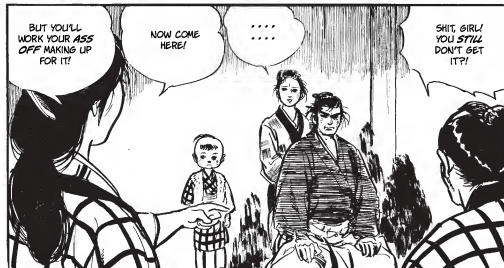
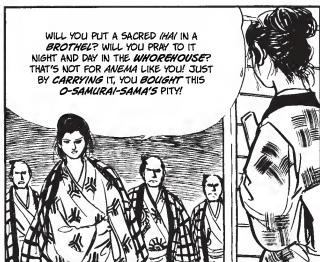
THAT YOUNG
LADY MURDERED
WHINING MATSU!

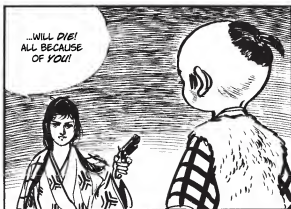


I
SAID
NO.












IF YOU
DON'T HAND
HER OVER,
I--

ENOUGH!



I'VE STOOD ON THIS DIRT,
EXPLAINING EVERYTHING,
AND STILL YOU REFUSE?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOU!

YOU RISK YOUR
AND YOUR SON'S
LIVES FOR AN ANEMA?
WHY...



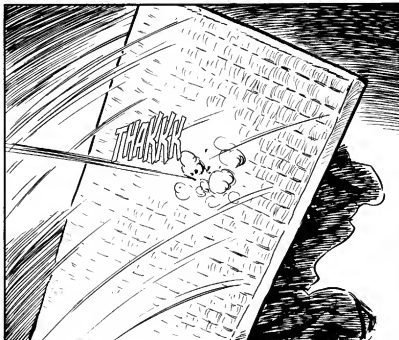
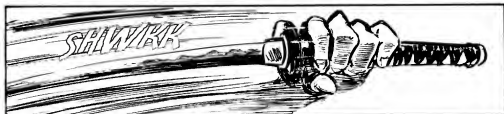
NOT NO-IHAI!
NOT UCHI-IHAI!
IT WAS A KATAMI-IHAI,
FOR PARENT AND CHILD
PARTED IN LIFE!

A LIVING IHAI,
FOR A FAMILY NEVER TO
MEET AGAIN! A PLEDGE TO NEVER
DESPAIR. A PROMISE TO NEVER HATE
THE PARENTS WHO WERE FORCED TO
SELL HER--TO KEEP THEM ALWAYS IN
HER HEART AND PRAYERS! HOW CAN
WE WHO WALK THE SIX PATHS AND
THE FOUR LIVES IGNORE THIS
FILIAL PIETY!? THIS PIETY
WE HAVE LOST?!



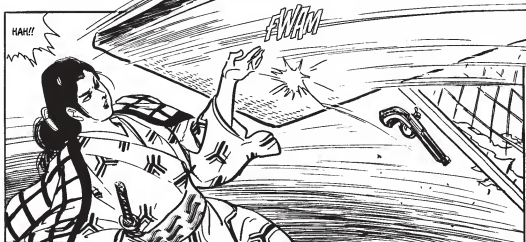
ONLY WE WHO
LIVE IN THE SHADOW
OF MEIFUMADO
CAN SAVE HER!

I HAVE SEEN
THE IHAI! THAT
IS REASON ENOUGH
NOT TO TURN
AWAY!









O-SAMURAI-SAMA! YOU MAY LIVE BY THE SIX WAYS AND THE FOUR LIVES, BUT WE BOHACHI ALSO HAVE FACE TO SAVE! SO... A PROPOSAL!

....
....

AN ANEMA BECOMES A TRUE ANAYA PROSTITUTE WHEN SHE'S DEFLOWERED BY HER FIRST MAN! IN OUR WORLD, WE CALL THAT MIZU-AGE, AND WE GET A TIDY SLIM FOR IT, TOO!

YOU DO THE MIZU-AGE! HELP HER FULFILL THAT ONE DUTY... AND I'LL SET HER FREE!

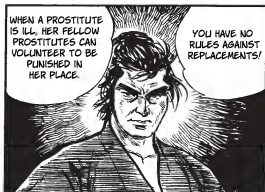
UNACCEPT-
ABLE!

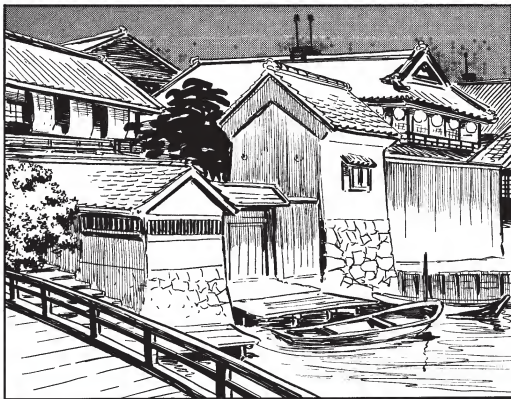
THEN THERE'S ONLY ONE OTHER WAY!

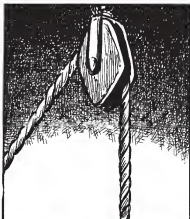
WATER TORTURE AND THE SPINNING TORTURE, THE PUNISHMENTS OF THE BOHACHI. BUT SHE MIGHT DIE...

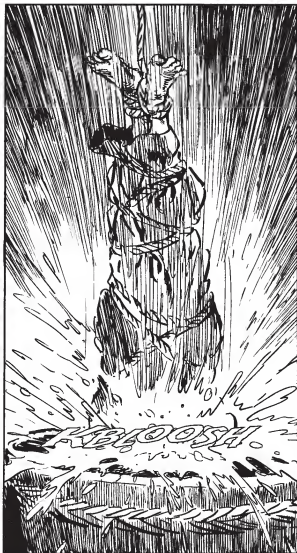
SO BE IT. THEN I'LL TAKE HER PLACE.

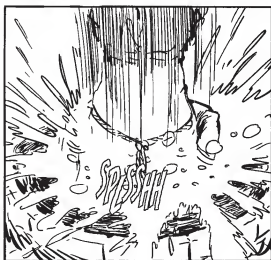
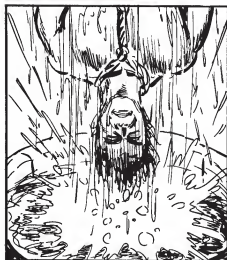
BUT... YOU'RE NOT...



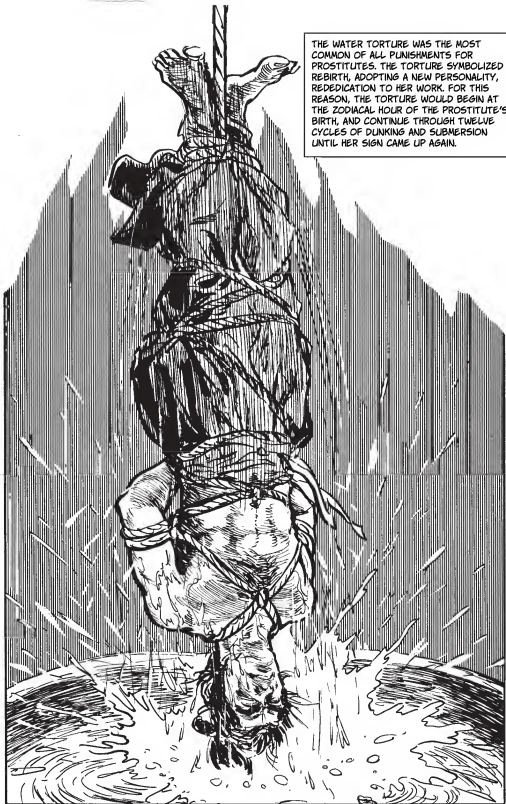


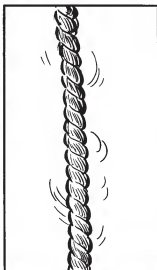


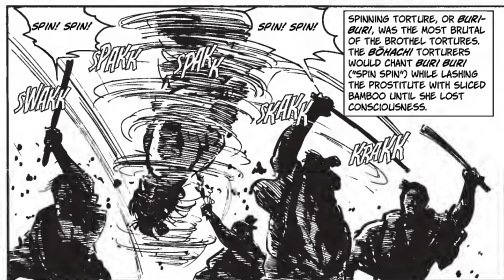
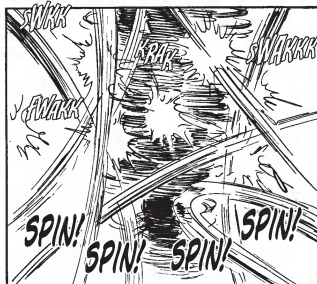




THE WATER TORTURE WAS THE MOST COMMON OF ALL PUNISHMENTS FOR PROSTITUTES. THE TORTURE SYMBOLIZED REBIRTH, ADOPTING A NEW PERSONALITY, REDEDICATION TO HER WORK. FOR THIS REASON, THE TORTURE WOULD BEGIN AT THE ZODIAC HOUR OF THE PROSTITUTE'S BIRTH, AND CONTINUE THROUGH TWELVE CYCLES OF DUNKING AND SUBMERSION UNTIL HER SIGN CAME UP AGAIN.









PAPA!

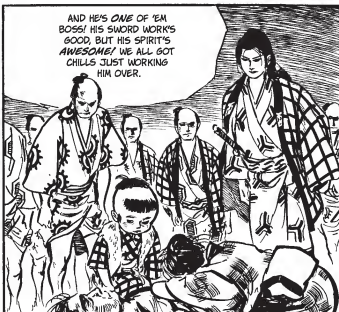
NO!!



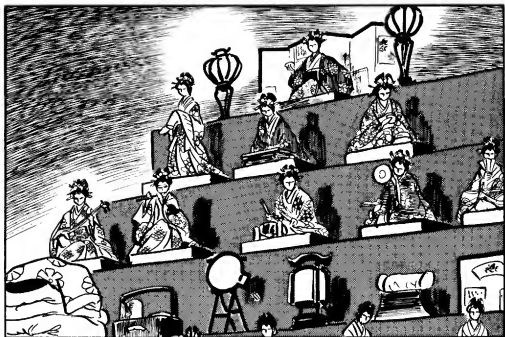
I SHOULDN'T...
HOW COULD I...OH,
O-SAMURAI-SAMA...
Jeniffe
Ja-hunnie



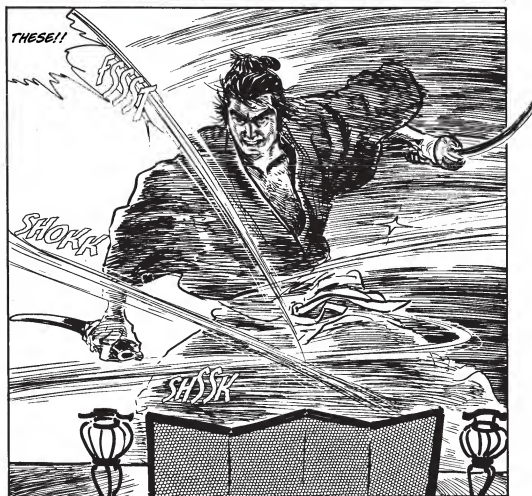
A TRUE
SAMURAI. SO
FEW OF THEM
LEFT...

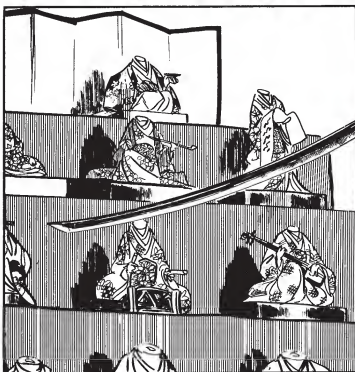
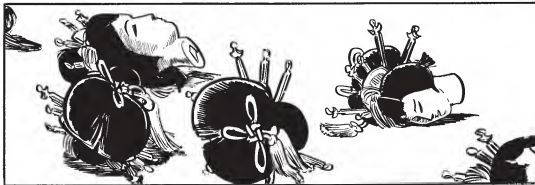


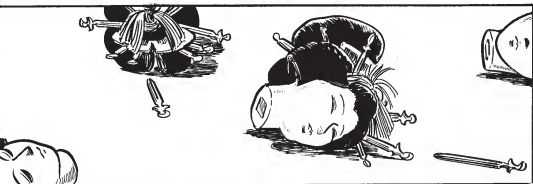
AND HE'S ONE OF 'EM
BOSS! HIS SWORD WORK'S
GOOD, BUT HIS SPIRIT'S
AWESOME! WE ALL GOT
CHILLS JUST WORKING
HIM OVER.



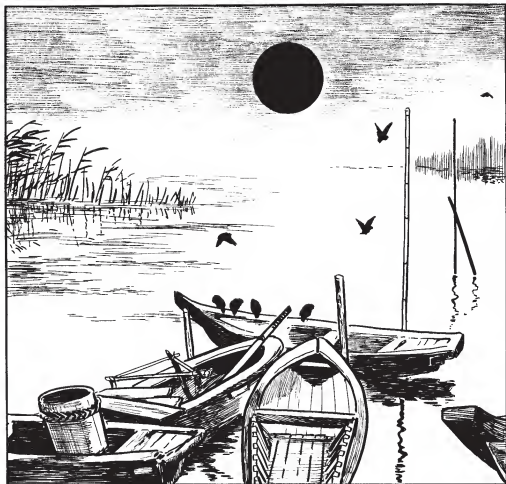
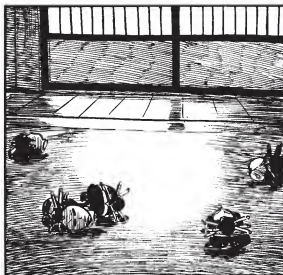


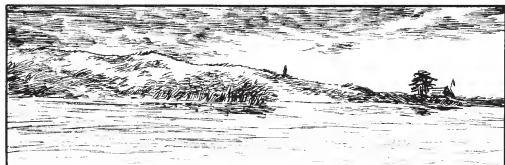
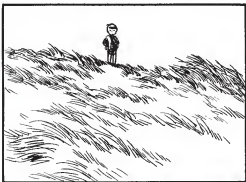










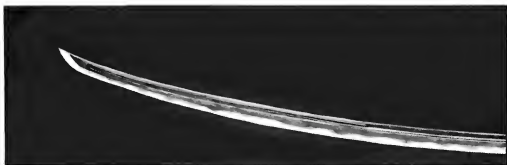






the nineteenth

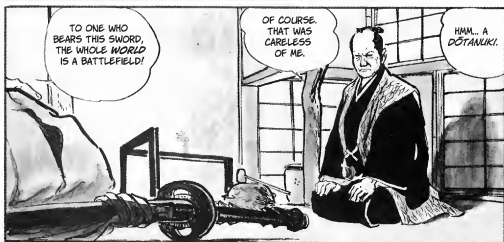
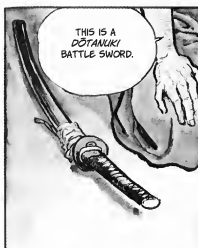
Close Quarters



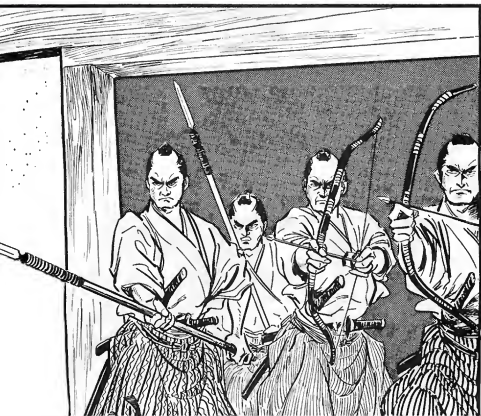
I NEITHER
LUST FOR YOUR
BLOOD NOR HAVE
ANY INTENT TO HARM,
GOOD SIR. I HARBOR
NO TRACE OF
ENMITY.

IF ANYTHING,
YOU SHOULD CONSIDER
ME YOUR CLIENT,
THE PERSON WHO PURCHASES
YOUR ASSASSIN SKILLS FOR
FIVE HUNDRED RYO.

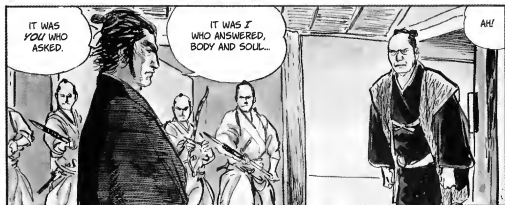


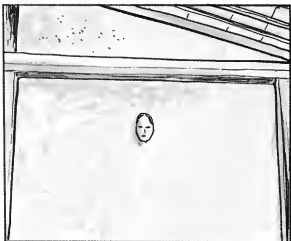












AND YET,
YOUR SAKKI
WAS...
TERRIFYING.

IT WAS FOOLISH OF ME
TO TEST YOU,
GOOD SIR. PLEASE
GRANT ME
PARDON.

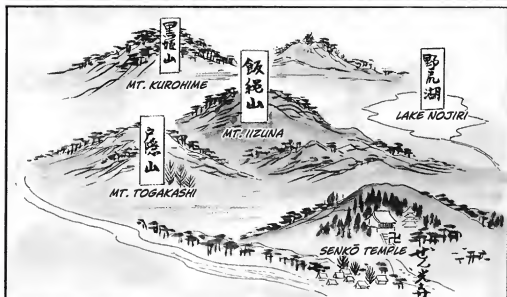
....

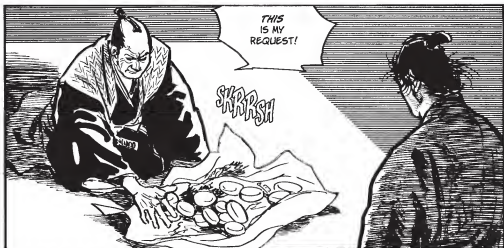
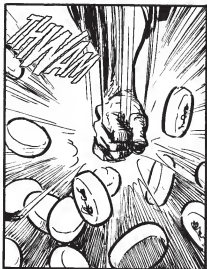


THE MEN I PLACED IN AMBUSH
WERE THE BEST IN OUR HAN,
ACCOMPLISHED AT CONCEALING
THEIR SAKKI, ANY SENSE
OF THEIR PRESENCE...

TO HAVE YOU
DETECT THEM,
JUST LIKE THAT...
I AM PUT IN
MY PLACE!

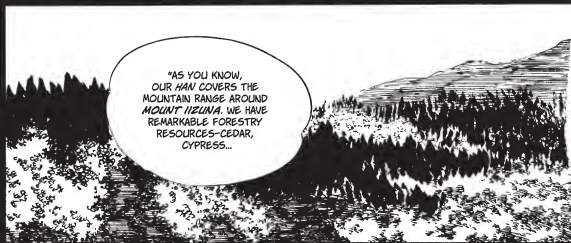
....



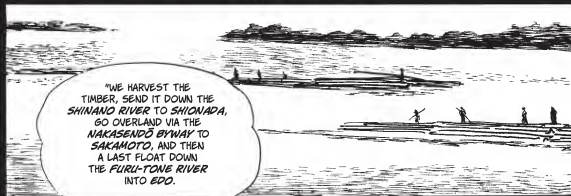




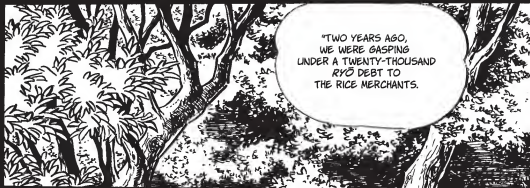
"WE ARE A
DESPERATELY
POOR HAN,
A MERE THIRTY
THOUSAND KOKU.



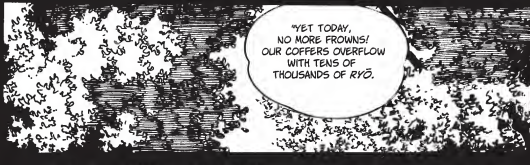
"AS YOU KNOW,
OUR HAN COVERS THE
MOUNTAIN RANGE AROUND
MOUNT IIZUNA. WE HAVE
REMARKABLE FORESTRY
RESOURCES—CEDAR,
CYPRESS...



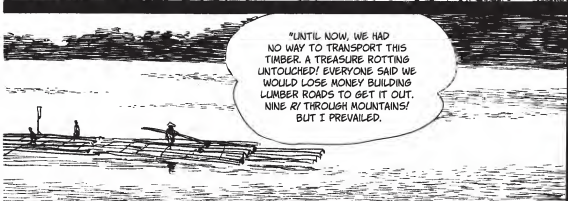
"WE HARVEST THE
TIMBER, SEND IT DOWN THE
SHINANO RIVER TO SHIONADA,
GO OVERLAND VIA THE
NAKASENDO BYWAY TO
SAKAMOTO, AND THEN
A LAST FLOAT DOWN
THE FURU-TONE RIVER
INTO EDO.



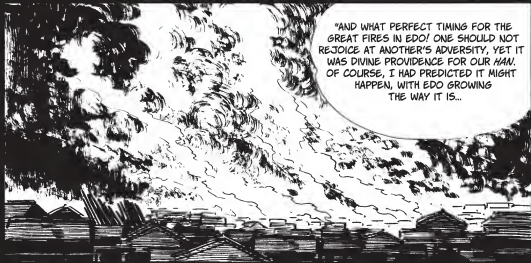
"TWO YEARS AGO,
WE WERE GASPING
UNDER A TWENTY-THOUSAND
RYŌ DEBT TO
THE RICE MERCHANTS.



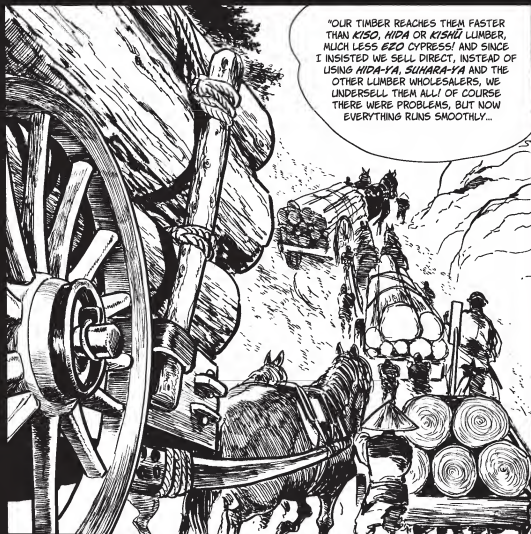
"YET TODAY,
NO MORE FROWNS!
OUR COFFERS OVERFLOW
WITH TENS OF
THOUSANDS OF RYŌ.



"UNTIL NOW, WE HAD
NO WAY TO TRANSPORT THIS
TIMBER. A TREASURE ROTTING
UNTOUCHED! EVERYONE SAID WE
WOULD LOSE MONEY BUILDING
LUMBER ROADS TO GET IT OUT.
NINE RY THROUGH MOUNTAINS!
BUT I PREVAILED.



"AND WHAT PERFECT TIMING FOR THE GREAT FIRES IN EDO! ONE SHOULD NOT REJOICE AT ANOTHER'S ADVERSITY, YET IT WAS DIVINE PROVIDENCE FOR OUR HAN. OF COURSE, I HAD PREDICTED IT MIGHT HAPPEN, WITH EDO GROWING THE WAY IT IS...



"OUR TIMBER REACHES THEM FASTER THAN KISO, HIDA OR KISHU LUMBER, MUCH LESS EDO CYPRESS! AND SINCE I INSISTED WE SELL DIRECT, INSTEAD OF USING HIDA-YA, SUHARA-YA AND THE OTHER LUMBER WHOLESALERS, WE UNDERSOLD THEM ALL! OF COURSE THERE WERE PROBLEMS, BUT NOW EVERYTHING RUNS SMOOTHLY...

"EXCEPT..."

THE PRECEPTS OF
OUR HAN STRICTLY FORBID
CUTTING DOWN THE
IZUNA FORESTS!!

PAYING DEBTS IS
IMPORTANT, BUT HOW
CAN WE PREY ON VICTIMS
OF THE FIRES IN EDO
TO SELL WOOD?

IT'S
UNWORTHY
OF SAMURAI!

OUR ANCESTOR
LORD YASUMASA
FORBADE FELLING THE
FOREST TO PREVENT
FLOODING!

ONE HEAVY RAIN, AND
THE RIVERS WILL OVERFLOW!
IZUNA HAN
WILL BE DROWNED!

THE JŌDAI
FATTENS HIS OWN
POCKETS IN THE NAME
OF DEBT RELIEF!

HE'D ABANDON
A HUNDRED YEARS
OF PEACE FOR
SHORT-TERM
PROFITS!

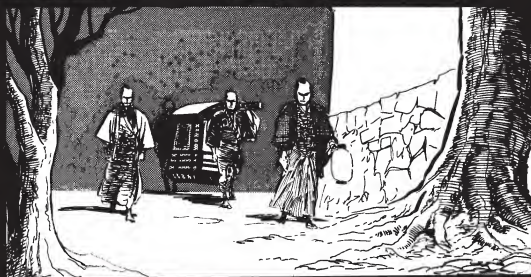
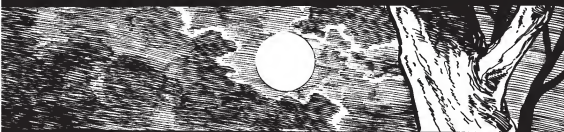
PUNISH HIM!

KILL
THE
SCOUNDREL!

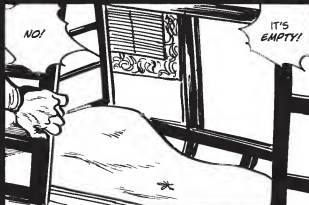
YAHN!!

"WHEN THE STARVING MAN EATS,
HUNGER IS FORGOTTEN, THE SAYING
GOES. OUR YOUNG HANSHI,
FORGETTING YESTERDAY'S
CRISIS, TURNED ON ME!"











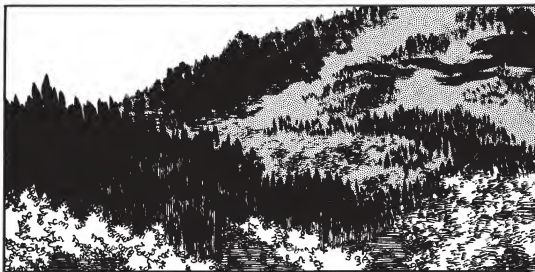




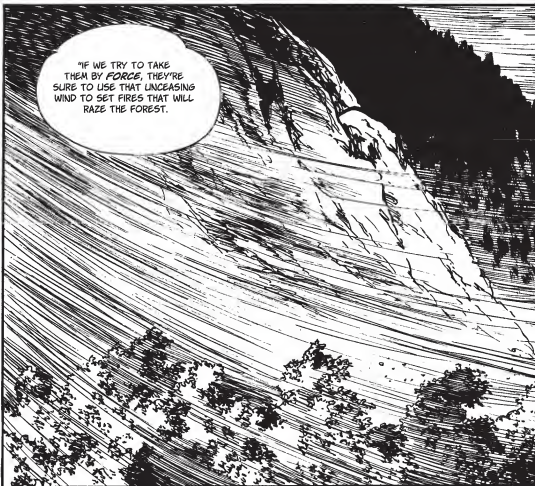
"I ARRANGED TO LURE
OUT THE DISSIDENTS WHO
OPPOSED ME, BUT THERE
WERE MANY MORE THAN
I'D EXPECTED..."

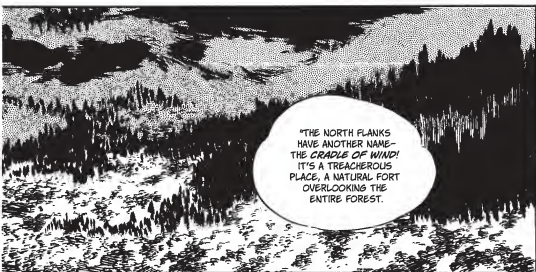




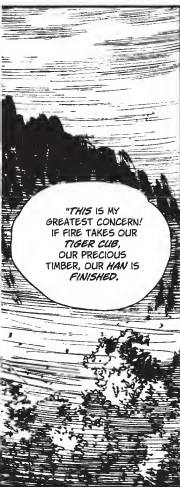


"IF WE TRY TO TAKE
THEM BY **FORCE**, THEY'RE
SURE TO USE THAT UNCEASING
WIND TO SET FIRES THAT WILL
RAZE THE FOREST.





"THE NORTH FLANKS
HAVE ANOTHER NAME-
THE *CRADLE OF WIND*!
IT'S A TREACHEROUS
PLACE, A NATURAL FORT
OVERLOOKING THE
ENTIRE FOREST.



"THIS IS MY
GREATEST CONCERN!
IF FIRE TAKES OUR
TIGER CUB,
OUR PRECIOUS
TIMBER, OUR *HAN* IS
FINISHED.



"AND SO THEY BUY TIME
TO SEND A MESSENGER
TO OUR *DAIMYŌ*, *LORD SHIGEHIRO*,
AT HIS *EDO* ESTATE. THEY WILL
DEFAME ME, I KNOW! REGARDLESS
OF THE MERITS, I'LL BE HELD
RESPONSIBLE FOR
THIS DISTURBANCE!

"THEY'VE POSTED
LOOKOUTS. THEY'VE EVEN
ANNOUNCED THEY WILL BURN
THE FOREST IF THEIR
MESSENGER IS HARMED.
YOUR MISSION...

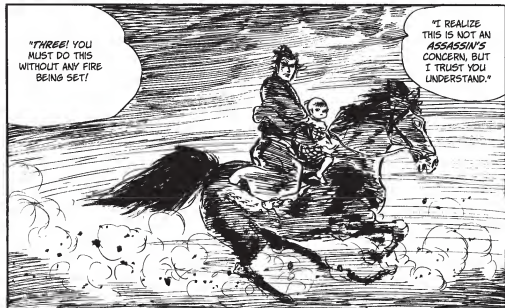


"ONE! KILL
THEIR MESSENGER
WHEN HE LEAVES
FOR EDO!"



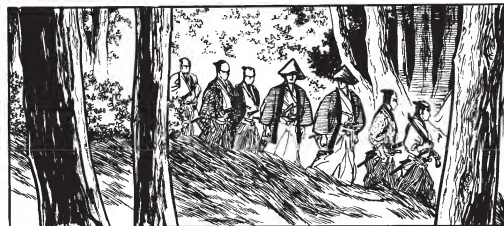
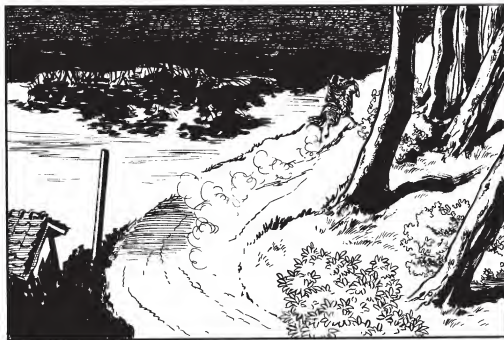
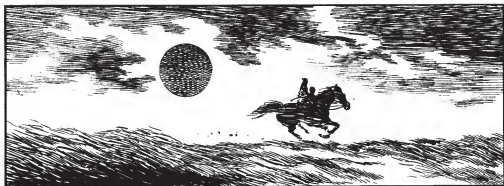
"TWO! KILL
THEIR LEADER,
KASAMA
DAISUKE!"

"KASAMA IS
SKILLED IN THE
TAISHA-RYU. HIS
LEADERSHIP ALONE WELDS
THESE HOTHEADS
TOGETHER. KILL HIM,
AND THE REST
FOLLOW."



"THREE! YOU
MUST DO THIS
WITHOUT ANY FIRE
BEING SET!"

"I REALIZE
THIS IS NOT AN
ASSASSIN'S
CONCERN, BUT
I TRUST YOU
UNDERSTAND."





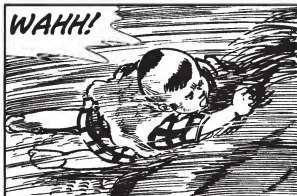


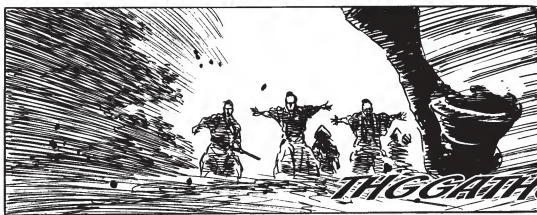


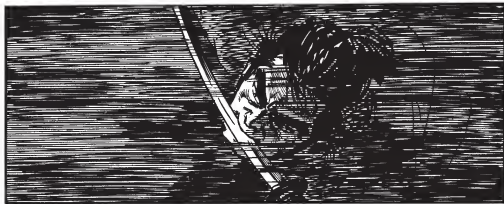
WAHHHH!

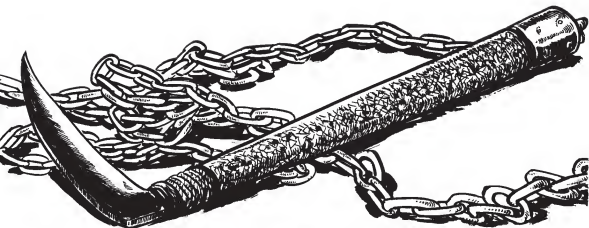
THIGGHA THIGGHA

TOK KATA
TOK KATA
TOK KATA











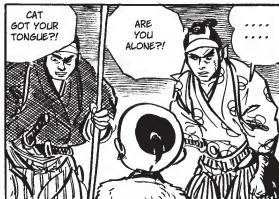
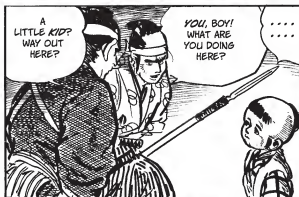
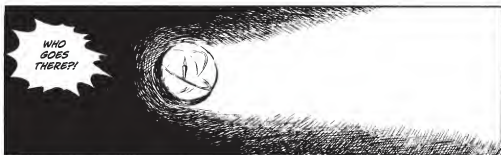




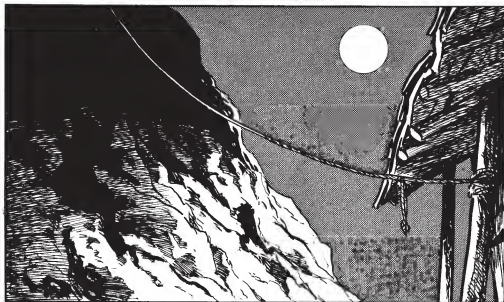


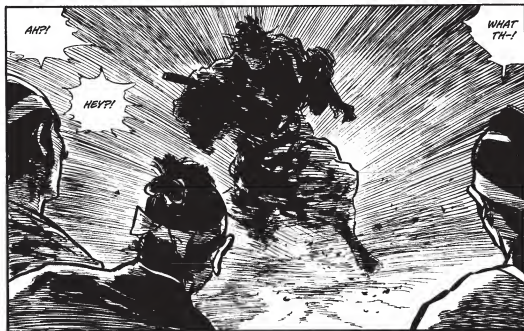


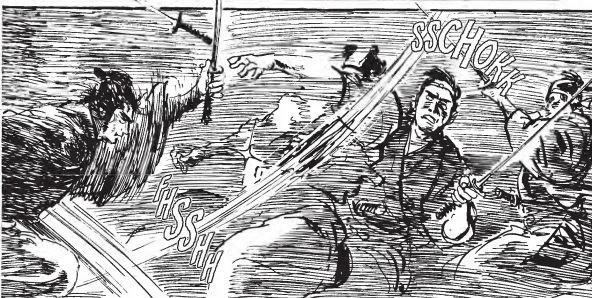


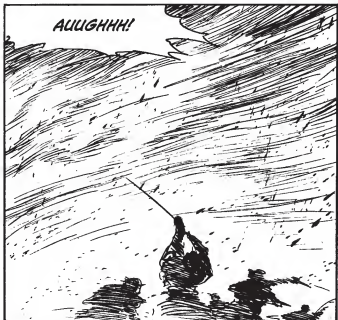


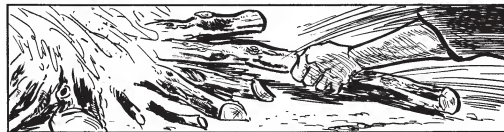
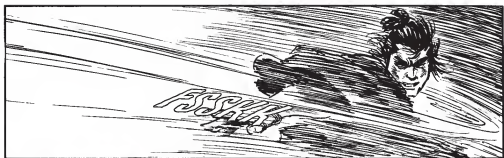


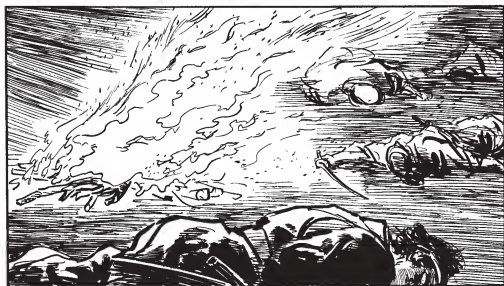


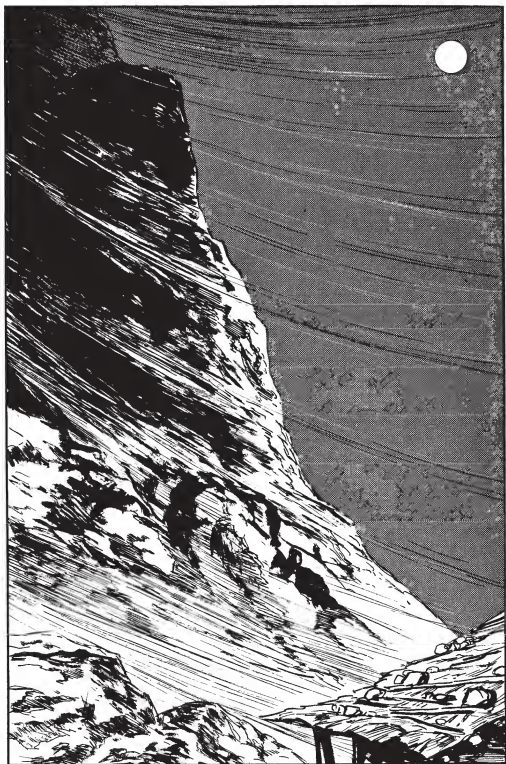


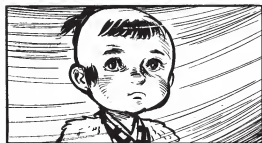


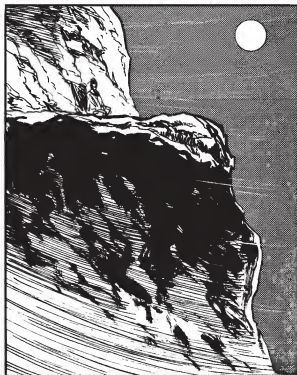


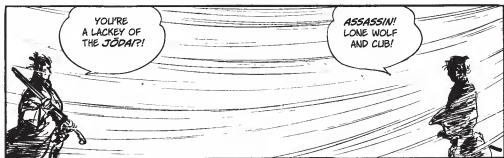












YOU'RE
A LACKEY OF
THE JŌDAI?!

ASSASSIN!
LONE WOLF
AND CUB!



LAUGHABLE!
THIS IS A SHISEKI-
NO-CHI! NO ROOM
TO MOVE!

ONE WHO
LIVES BY THE
SWORD SHOULD
KNOW BETTER.



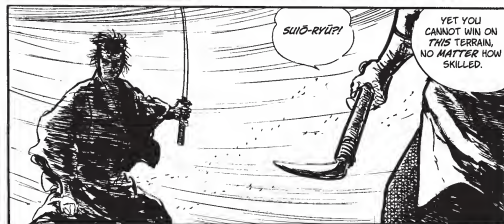
KNOWING
THAT, I SEEK
A DUEL.



SO
BE IT!

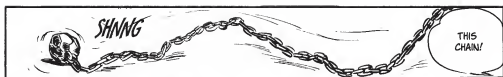


SHARK

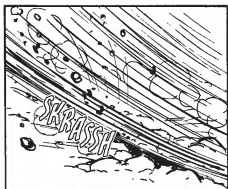


SUIŌ-RYŪ?!

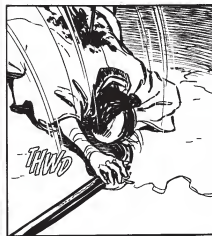
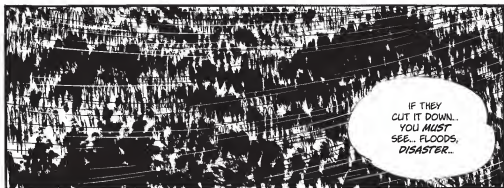
YET YOU
CANNOT WIN ON
THIS TERRAIN,
NO MATTER HOW
SKILLED.

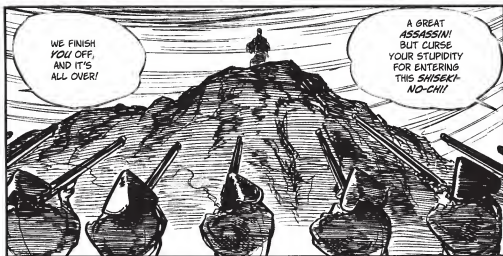




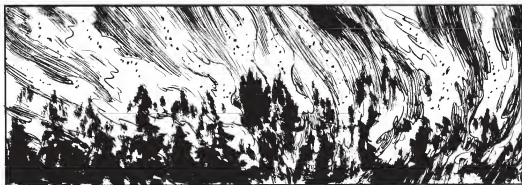


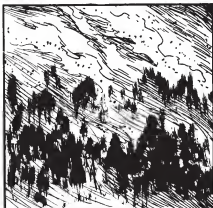












GLOSSARY

annya

A working prostitute. There was a thriving sex industry in Edo-period Japan, and scores of different words to describe the different varieties of sex workers.

Benten

One of the seven gods and goddesses of good fortune popular among the common people, a folk version of Buddhist Boddhisatva, a manifestation of one aspect of the Buddha's nature. In this case, a Boddhisatva of mercy and compassion, usually depicted as female.

bōhachi, kutsuwa

The Japanese *yakuza* specialize in different underworld activities, from gambling and protection scams to prostitution. *Bōhachi* and *kutsuwa* were Edo-period terms for *yakuza* dealing in organized prostitution.

bugi

The martial arts, the arts of war. Restricted to the samurai class under the Tokugawa shogunate's strict social controls.

daimyō

A feudal lord.

dōtanuki

A battle sword. Literally, "sword that cuts through torsos."

Edo

The capital of medieval Japan and the seat of the shogunate. The site of modern-day Tokyo.

go-yō

Literally, "official business." Police and posses carried "*go-yō*" lanterns when searching for criminals, identifying themselves as law enforcers. A shouted "*Go-yō!*" could be the Edo equivalent of "Halt! Police!" for a *metsuke*, or "Make way!" for an official procession.

han

A feudal domain.

hanshi

Samurai in the service of a *han*.

haori

Half-coats.

hina

Elaborate dolls, traditionally displayed in the spring for the Girl's Day festival.

honorifics

Japan is a class and status society, and proper forms of address are critical. Common markers of respect are the prefixes *o* and *go*, and a wide range of suffixes. Some of the suffixes you will encounter in *Lone Wolf and Cub*:

chan – for children, young women, and close friends

dono – archaic; used for higher-ranked or highly respected figures

sama – used for superiors

san – the most common, used among equals or near-equals

sensei – used for teachers, masters, respected entertainers, and politicians

ihai

A Buddhist mortuary tablet. The death name of the deceased, given after they have passed away, is written on the tablet, which is kept at the family temple or altar. *No-ihai* were placed on the grave, *uchi-ihai* on household altars.

jōdai

Castle warden. The ranking *han* official in charge of a *daimyō*'s castle when the *daimyō* was spending his obligatory years in Edo.

kannenbutsu

Literally, “cold prayers.” There were many kinds of itinerant monks in Edo-period Japan, traveling the land as part of their religious discipline and relying on the handouts of the faithful. It was also a useful disguise for those with more than religion on their mind. *Kannenbutsu* were known for their penance in the chill of the coldest nights.

kōgi kaishakunin

The shogun's own second, who performed executions ordered by the shogun.

koku

A bale of rice. The traditional measure of a *han*'s wealth, a measure of its agricultural land and productivity.

meifumadō

The Buddhist Hell. The way of demons and damnation.

metsuke

An inspector. A post combining the functions of chief of police and chief intelligence officer.

ri

Old unit of measurement. Approximately 4 kilometers (2.5 miles).

rōnin

A masterless samurai. Literally, “one adrift on the waves.” Members of the samurai caste who have lost their masters through the dissolution of *han*, expulsion for misbehavior, or other reasons. Prohibited from working as farmers or merchants under the strict Confucian caste system imposed by the Tokugawa shogunate, many impoverished *ronin* became “hired guns” for whom the code of the samurai was nothing but empty words.

ryō

A gold piece.

ryū

Often translated as “school.” The many variations of swordsmanship and other martial arts were passed down from generation to generation to the offspring of the originator of the technique or set of techniques, and to any *deishi* students that sought to learn from the master. The largest schools had their own *dōjō* training centers and scores of students. An

effective swordsman had to study the different techniques of the various schools to know how to block them in combat. Many *ryū* also had a set of special, secret techniques that were only taught to school initiates.

sakki

The palpable desire to kill, directed at another person. Sometimes called blood lust. Based on the concept of *ki*, or energy, found in spiritual practices and Japanese martial arts like Aikido. These body energies can be felt beyond the physical self by the trained and self-aware.

seisatsu yodatsu

Under the four-caste social system imposed by the Tokugawa shogunate, the samurai class had the unquestioned right to kill those in lower castes, often for the smallest of insults and infractions.

seppuku

The right to kill oneself with honor to atone for failure, or to follow one's master into death. Only the samurai class was allowed this glorious but excruciating death. The abdomen was cut horizontally, followed by an upward cut to spill out the intestines. When possible, a *kaishakunin* performed a beheading after the cut was made to shorten the agony.

shaba

Yakuza divided the world between the *shima* ("island"), the world of the *yakuza*, and *shaba*, the normal world.

shima

1. The zone of death.
2. See *shaba*.

sō-metsuke

Another name for "*ō-metsuke*." The senior law-enforcement officer of the shogunate, reporting directly to the *rōjū* senior councilors who advised the shogun.

tono

Lord, *daimyō*. Sometimes used as a form of address, as in *tono-sama*.

yakuza

Japan's criminal syndicates. In the Edo period, *yakuza* were a common part of the landscape, running houses of gambling and prostitution. As long as they did not overstep their bounds, they were tolerated by the authorities, a tradition little changed in modern Japan.

zankanjō

A confession. Vendettas were an accepted form of vigilante justice in the Edo period. While the killers knew the penalty for their act was death, they could exonerate their reputations after death with a *zankanjō* explaining their actions.

zegen

Procurer. Prostitution was legal in the Edo period, and the procurer was an essential link in the chain. Impoverished rural families would sell daughters to *zegen*, who sold them in turn to urban brothels.

KAZUO KOIKE

Though widely respected as a powerful writer of graphic fiction, Kazuo Koike has spent a lifetime reaching beyond the bounds of the comics medium. Aside from co-creating and writing the successful *Lone Wolf and Cub* and *Crying Freeman* manga, Koike has hosted television programs; founded a golf magazine; produced movies; written popular fiction, poetry, and screenplays; and mentored some of Japan's best manga talent.

Lone Wolf and Cub was first serialized in Japan in 1970 (under the title *Kozure Okami*) in *Manga Action* magazine and continued its hugely popular run for many years, being collected as the stories were published, and reprinted worldwide. Koike collected numerous awards for his work on the series throughout the next decade. Starting in 1972, Koike adapted the popular manga into a series of six films, the *Baby Cart Assassin* saga, garnering widespread commercial success and critical acclaim for his screenwriting.

This wasn't Koike's only foray into film and video. In 1996, *Crying Freeman*, the manga Koike created with artist Ryoichi Ikegami, was

produced in Hollywood and released to commercial success in Europe and is currently awaiting release in America.

And to give something back to the medium that gave him so much, Koike started the *Gekiga Sonjuku*, a college course aimed at helping talented writers and artists — such as *Ranma 1/2* creator Rumiko Takahashi — break into the comics field.

The driving focus of Koike's narrative is character development, and his commitment to character is clear: "Comics are carried by characters. If a character is well created, the comic becomes a hit." Kazuo Koike's continued success in comics and literature has proven this philosophy true.



GOSEKI KOJIMA

Goseki Kojima was born on November 3, 1928, the very same day as the godfather of Japanese comics, Osamu Tezuka. While just out of junior high school, the self-taught Kojima began painting advertising posters for movie theaters to pay his bills.

In 1950, Kojima moved to Tokyo, where the postwar devastation had given rise to special manga forms for audiences too poor to buy the new manga magazines. Kojima created art for *kami-shibai*, or “paper-play” narrators, who would use manga story sheets to present narrated street plays. Kojima moved on to creating works for the *kashi-bon* market, bookstores that rented out books, magazines, and manga to mostly low-income readers. He soon became highly popular among *kashi-bon* readers.

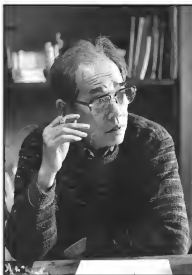
In 1967, Kojima broke into the magazine market with his series *Dojinki*. As the manga magazine market grew and diversified, he turned out a steady stream of popular series.

In 1970, in collaboration with Kazuo Koike, Kojima began the work that would seal his reputation, *Kozure*

Okami (*Lone Wolf and Cub*). Before long the story had become a gigantic hit, eventually spinning off a television series, six motion pictures, and even theme song records. Koike and Kojima were soon dubbed the “golden duo” and produced success after success on their way to the pinnacle of the manga world.

When *Manga Japan* magazine was launched in 1994, Kojima was asked to serve as consultant, and he helped train the next generation of manga artists.

In his final years, Kojima turned to creating original graphic novels based on the movies of his favorite director, Akira Kurosawa. Kojima passed away on January 5, 2000 at the age of 71.



THE RONIN REPORT

by Tim Ervin

In our fast and chaotic modern world, it is of increasing importance for one to choose and stay on a path. But what we might consider to be a central goal these days, such as monetary success or weight loss, falls far short of what a samurai considered in his life's path. A samurai's way, the "Way of the Warrior," was deeply entrenched in mastery of weapons and strategic tactics, but beyond common warfare was a depth of culture and awareness — the need to practice refined arts and social customs, the ability to negotiate risky alliances, and an acute perception of danger. This is the way of bushido.

Bushido, which literally translated means "the way of the military man" (hence, the Way of the Warrior), was a chivalrous code of conduct that defined the true soul of a samurai more than the swords on his waist. At the heart of *bushido* is death — not the act of dying or the violence that leads to it, but the concept that a samurai is prepared for death, ready to lay down his life for his master at any and all times,

and to accept death gracefully. However, according to Miyamoto Musashi, a legendary samurai from the early 1600s who knew no equal in skill and concentration, the essence of the Way of the Warrior is “to believe that you cannot fail in doing anything.”

Miyamoto wrote that line in the introduction of his *Book of Five Rings*, which explored *heiho*, his own version of the Way of the Warrior. Miyamoto lived at a time when war was waning, and long, peaceful periods allowed him to adapt his passions to art and culture, but the warrior’s way was not always so refined. Approximately 700 years earlier, amidst furious battles against the indigenous Ainu peoples, the earliest samurai warriors began to evolve. As the samurai realized their power, the importance of a warrior’s skill became an honored element and a quasi-religion. In these early times, the samurai’s skills focused more on archery than swordplay, and samurai were judged upon their Way of the Horse and Bow or their Way of the Bow and Arrow, which signified a samurai’s social bearing and position as much as his ability on the field of battle. This designation was central to the separation of samurai as an elite social class. As time passed like wind over the bloody battle plains, the

role and importance of *bushido* to the warrior class increased with the importance of the samurai themselves. But eventually, as with Miyamoto, the time would come when the samurai became obsolete.

It is notable that the story of *Lone Wolf and Cub* is supposed to take place about twenty years after the death of Miyamoto Musashi. At this time, peace and control ruled the day, and samurai were forced to rethink their positions in the world. Many samurai settled into the arts, some writing the philosophy of *bushido* into books for future generations. Many samurai roamed across the landscape proving their mettle against other samurai, keeping the *bushido* in death a part of everyday life. And yet many other samurai learned to farm and ply other trades, all the while using lessons of *bushido* in their daily lives, and weaving the warrior arts into common life.

To learn the ways of *bushido* and bring it into your daily life, pick up *The Book of Five Rings* by Miyamoto Musashi, *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu, *Hagakure* by Tsunetomo Yamamoto, or *Code of the Samurai: A Modern Translation of the Bushido Shoshinsu* by Yuzan Daidoji and Thomas Cleary.



Lone Wolf and Cub (Kozure Okami in Japan) is acknowledged worldwide for the brilliant writing of series creator Kazuo Koike and the groundbreaking cinematic visuals of the late Goseki Kojima. Creating unforgettable imagery of stark beauty, kinetic fury, and visceral thematic power, the epic samurai adventure has influenced a generation of visual storytellers both in Japan and in the West.

"Lone Wolf and Cub . . . has a timelessness and clarity to it, which pushes it up to the edge that separates comic books from literature."

— Matt Brady

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